



## FSC monthly sitrep

### COVID-19 Situation Update 13<sup>th</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020

#### Summary

##### Asia & Pacific

In **Cox's Bazar**, urban livelihoods have been significantly impacted by lockdown measures and vulnerability levels have almost doubled, with a substantial reduction in food expenditure and implications of heightened food insecurity.

In the **Pacific region**, FSC partners are strengthening their interventions in response to both the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical cyclone (TC) Harold.

##### East Africa

In **Somalia**, 3.4 million people are estimated to be in IPC 3 and 4 through September 2020 due to the cumulative and combined effect of desert locusts, flooding, COVID-19 and other recurrent shocks.

In **South Sudan**, market prices of food commodities have risen considerably, not just due to pandemic restrictions but also from seasonal rains and a depreciation of the local currency. Humanitarian access remains a challenge given COVID-19, flooding and pockets of insecurity in the country.

In **Ethiopia**, multiple hazards are likely to contribute to increased food needs in the country, including the negative impacts of desert locust, COVID-19 on food systems and existing humanitarian needs among displaced people.

##### Latin America

In **Haiti** prices remain high, with the price of the average national food basket rising by 29% on an annual basis, in direct correlation with the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, slowdown in economic activity and the closure of borders. In addition, below-average rains since the end of March have slowed agricultural activities across the country – most regions have not yet started planting crops for the spring season.

In **Colombia**, increasing displacement and other effects due to armed violence in various departments could exacerbate food insecurity in the country, creating multiple effects in a context of livelihoods loss due to COVID-19.

## Near East and Eastern Europe

In **Iraq**, WFP's Hunger Monitoring System found that national food consumption scores had improved by the beginning of August, with 430,000 fewer people reporting poor or borderline consumption compared to last month. Summer agriculture production is ongoing, and the Ministry of Agriculture continues to enforce import bans on certain products to protect local production.

In **Lebanon**, a large explosion on 4 August in the port of Beirut killed more than 200 people and injured over 6,000. The explosion destroyed port infrastructure, damaged residential buildings and businesses on a massive scale, and left an estimated 300,000 people homeless, many in need of food assistance (assessments underway). A flash appeal was launched with a USD 244.7M requirement for the Food Security Sector.

Recent clashes in **Libya** have complicated humanitarian needs, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Large-scale displacement, including to the eastern region, has increased strain on national and humanitarian response capacities, which have been overwhelmed by the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases in the country.

In **the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)**, input prices remained higher than pre-COVID 19 levels. The reintroduction of COVID-19 preventive measures has further reduced production below pre-pandemic levels, and farm labour availability continues to be limited by fear of contagion and movement restrictions across checkpoints.

In **Syria**, due to a strengthening in the SYP/USD informal exchange rate from end June to mid/end July, food and non-food items experienced much lower increases in their national average prices for the first half of July. Nevertheless, prices did still increase compared to June levels.

## Southern Africa

In **Mozambique** the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate due to multiple crises, most recently consecutive climatic shocks (drought and floods) in central and southern parts of the country, conflict in northern areas and the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the entire country, with hotspots in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Maputo provinces and Maputo City disrupting livelihoods and leading to food insecurity.

In **the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, humanitarian access remains critical in some of the main hotspots (Ituri, Kivus, Tanganika), mostly due to insecurity. While the ongoing harvest period in most provinces favours a tendency towards stability and/or reduced prices, the areas affected by insecurity still face food price spikes.

## West and Central Africa

In **Cameroon**, there is a growing number of people in need of urgent food assistance (66 percent more than at the beginning of the year), but also a growing number of people who are not being reached with food assistance due to access, funding and capacity constraints.

In **Nigeria**, food prices remain high, causing a gap between the MEB and the transfer value, which is at its highest since 2017. Moreover, insecurity has led to restrictions in fertilizer movements and limited access to land, while people are being displaced by floods that are also causing damage to crops.

In **the Central African Republic (CAR)**, bad weather has rendered access to certain areas of the country particularly challenging. In western areas, persistent inter-communal tension has increased the need for humanitarian assistance.

### Cox's Bazar

#### **Situation update:**

- [A recent Cabinet circular](#) asserted that restrictions on overall activities/movement would be extended until 31 August 2020, with a curfew from 10 pm to 5 am. Wearing facemasks, maintaining social distancing and health guidelines is obliged in public, with any violations subject to legal action.
- According to preliminary findings from a WFP Urban Assessment, urban livelihoods in Cox's Bazar have been significantly impacted by lockdown measures, as incomes are depleted or lost altogether. The assessment also suggests that vulnerability levels (high & moderate) have almost doubled, with a substantial reduction in food expenditure and implications of heightened food insecurity.

#### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Within the [Joint Monitoring Framework Pilot](#) – an analytical tool designed to flag food insecurity risks within Rohingya and host communities in the context of COVID-19 – a risk analysis workshop was held with partners to identify information gaps and inform future programming.
- All households targeted for emergency support among vulnerable host communities in all sub-districts have been reached with in-kind food rations. Unconditional cash grants began in August and will be completed in September 2020.
- Essential activities are planned to be resumed as per [guidance to CiCs](#), enabling partner access for self-reliance interventions in camps, such as mask production, agricultural input distributions, soap production, recycling and up-cycling activities.
- Local production of cloth masks in host communities and camps, coordinated by LHWG, has provided income opportunities to vulnerable people, particularly women. All refugee populations will receive two cloth masks per person, with the potential for top-up distributions. Vulnerable Bangladeshis according to the District Commissioner's office will also receive two cloth masks. Video on mask making [here](#).
- Child protection tip sheet on food assistance in [English](#) and [Rohingya](#) was developed jointly with the Child Protection sub-Sector.

#### **HRP and funding:**

As of 12 August on [FTS](#):

- Joint Response Plan (JRP): 137.7 m (54 percent) funded
- COVID-19: 1.1m (2 percent) funded (under-reported)
- Mid-Term review of JRP 2020 and COVID-19 addendum to be completed by 3 September

### Pacific

#### **Situation update:**

- Most Pacific countries are still under lockdown, with borders closed to international arrivals
- Cargo is still permitted, so food and agricultural products can be delivered in the region

#### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- The report of the Vanuatu Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for TC Harold, in the context of COVID-19 has been released, stating USD 177 million loss and damage from TC Harold and COVID-19 to the food security and agriculture sector. Total recovery needs listed in the report are USD 46 million - this will inform future agricultural support from FAO and the Pacific Community (SPC) in particular.

- WFP is rolling out mVAM vulnerability analyses across Pacific countries. Progress is being made in Fiji, with hundreds of surveys underway in Kiribati, Samoa and Tonga. This also encompasses market monitoring platform development in conjunction with CTA and IFAD, and will eventually form the basis for a food security monitoring platform for the Pacific region
- The regional FSC continues to hold bilateral meetings with national sectors/clusters in Samoa and Tonga, to support development of workplans, procedural documents and minimum preparedness action plans.

**HRP and funding:**

- The COVID-19 HRP funding gap has reduced slightly since last update. Better alignment of expectations and delivery of projects by HRP agencies has been achieved.
- FAO has reduced its funding gap and the Pacific Disability Forum has been working on COVID-19 food security-related funding through its own means. Any further funding will be allocated for 2021 projects.

## NEAR EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE UPDATES

**Iraq**

**COVID-19 cases:** 180,133

**Situation update:**

- COVID-19 cases continue to rise across federal Iraq and the semi-autonomous region. On 3 August, WFP’s Hunger Monitoring System found that national food consumption scores had improved, with 430,000 fewer people reporting poor or borderline consumption compared to last month. Summer agriculture production is ongoing and the Ministry of Agriculture continues to enforce import bans on certain products to protect local production, although vegetable prices have fluctuated significantly.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:**

- Households in camp quarantine and isolation (Q/I) will receive monthly rations from WFP, distributed in coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement. WFP will also provide immediate response rations (IRR) to individuals and households in Q/I, in addition to those who are self-isolated in camps lacking Q/I facilities.

**HRP and funding:** N/A

**Challenges:**

- The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has called for negotiations with Turkey to address concerns over the decreased flow of the Tigris River, attributed primarily to the newly operational Alysus Dam. IDP and refugee households are departing camps, requiring ongoing monitoring of those movements and altered food security needs (i.e. 1,224 families departed from various camps in Duhok, in addition to 858 out-of-camp families, to return to Sinjar).

**Lebanon**

**COVID-19 cases:** 9,337

**Situation update:**

- On 4 August, a large explosion occurred in the port of Beirut, killing more than 200 people and injuring over 6,000. The explosion destroyed port infrastructure, caused damage to residential buildings and businesses at a massive scale, and left an estimated 300,000 people homeless, many in need of food assistance (assessments underway). The explosion occurred when Lebanon was already coping with

a multi-faceted crisis of economic contraction, increasing poverty rates and rising prices of basic commodities. The destruction of Beirut Port and accompanying structures, such as animal and plant quarantine facilities, has had a direct effect on the country's food availability. Lebanon's grain silos of up to 120,000mt capacity were destroyed. Lebanon depends on food imports: 80 percent of its wheat is imported, most through Beirut Port. Reportedly, there is currently four-to-six weeks of grain supply reserves in-country; a three-month supply is standard to ensure food security. Most imports and exports have been redirected to Tripoli Port (85 km north of Beirut), which has a smaller capacity than Beirut Port and is likely to be under severe strain. Costs of commodities are expected to rise significantly, even if the container terminal at Beirut Port resumes operations.

- The impact of the explosion cannot be separated from the ongoing crisis in relation to COVID-19 management. The chaos which ensued after the explosion and now the protests involving thousands of people have led to social distancing measures being ignored. Lebanon was already witnessing an upsurge in the number of confirmed cases, registering over 200 cases daily since 5 August. Beirut is one of the four governorates with the highest COVID-19 cases nationwide. This uptick led the Government to announce a new lockdown from 30 July to 3 August, which was planned to continue between 6 and 10 August. Following the blast, lockdown measures were revoked.
- Following two weeks of a decrease in the weekly SMEB price, a price increase of 2.5% was registered from 20 to 27 July, to LBP 100,578 - a 91 percent since the start of March. From 27 July to 3 August (the week of the port explosion), a decrease of 2.5 percent had been registered. After trading close to the LBP 8,000 level during the last two weeks of July, the black-market rate witnessed an increase following the Beirut port explosion, reaching LBP 8,500 on the morning of August 6.

#### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:**

- For the Beirut Port Explosion, a Flash Appeal was submitted on August 12 indicating priority activities:
  - Delivery of immediate, life-saving hot meals and in-kind food rations for up to 64,900 highly vulnerable people affected by the explosion, including people with heightened nutritional needs and severely vulnerable and stranded migrant workers.
  - Strengthened breastfeeding and complementary feeding counselling support for mothers of children under 2 years of age, through primary healthcare centres and community-based outreach.
  - Expand ongoing cash-based assistance in the Beirut area for up to 150,000 beneficiaries affected by the triple shocks of the explosion, COVID-19, and the economic crisis.
  - Provision of cash for work for 10,000 food-insecure workers/families engaged in cleaning and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure.
  - Stabilize national grain supply through the provision of up to 70,000mt of wheat.
  - Provide infrastructure and light rehabilitation support to augment port operations and other infrastructure capacity including the establishment of a temporary bulk grain receiving facility at Beirut Port.
- Planning and analysis for the LCRP 2021 commenced in July, with the first regional level analysis workshops conducted in early August. The next steps after all regional inter-agency analysis workshops have been conducted will be a multi-stakeholder workshop followed by adjustments to the Sector Theories of Change.
- In early July 2020, WFP increased the transfer value for food assistance to LBP 70,000 to keep up with inflation. The transfer value has not increased since.

#### **HRP and funding:**

- The food security sector has submitted a flash appeal with activities as laid out above to respond to the Beirut Port Explosion emergency, with a requirement of USD 244.7 million.

- The process for the first standard allocation (including food assistance) of the OCHA-led Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF) was finalized and four partners selected to provide one-off food parcels to a total of 15,653 households across the country. Following the Beirut Port explosion, OCHA increased the LHF envelope by USD 9 million, with an extra allocation of USD 1 million to 1.5 million for the food security sector. In the interests of time, there will not be an open call for proposals. Instead, OCHA in coordination with the FSS will select sector partners based on capacity and ongoing work.

**Challenges:**

- The Beirut Port explosion led to a plethora of organizations and individuals providing food, water, shelter and cleaning. Efforts are ongoing from the FSS coordination team to compile information about assistance provided and assessments planned and conducted, to avoid overlaps and ensure an efficient response. The sector coordination team appreciates the support of the gFSC to manage these tasks.
- Partners have less capacity to respond to the growing number of food-related referrals after the explosion, however funding appeals if successful should help to expand their operations.
- Violent protests broke out in Beirut after the explosion, with people calling for the resignation of the Government, which stepped down on August 10 but has stayed on in a caretaker capacity until a new cabinet is formed. The economic situation continues to deteriorate.
- The number of COVID-19 cases is increasing, particularly in the days following the explosion. Numbers are expected to further rise due to non-adherence to social distancing and prevention measures.

**Libya**

**COVID-19 cases:** 8,579

**Situation update:**

- Recent clashes in Libya, especially in Bani Waleed and Tarhouna but most recently in Sirt, are complicating humanitarian needs already compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Huge displacement, including to the eastern region, has increased strain on national and humanitarian response capacities, which have been overwhelmed by the rapid expansion of COVID-19 in the country. There has been an increase of 3,102 new positive cases in the past two weeks, reaching a total of 5,929 by 11 August.
- Public health measures, including widespread restrictions on movement and mobility, had negative socio-economic consequences for vulnerable people on the move. During the June COVID-19 Mobility Tracking, 86 percent of residents, including IDPs and host community members, were negatively affected to some extent due to curfews and restrictions on movement.
- Although the cost of the MEB fell between May and June 2020 across Libya, overall it is still 15 percent higher than before COVID-19 restrictions were implemented in March.
- According to the July 2020 DTM update, the biggest obstacle in accessing adequate food was food being too expensive compared to household purchasing power. The municipalities of Sebha and Misrata also reported shortages of food items, while food assistance was identified as the top priority for returnees and second top for IDPs (after accommodation).

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage**

- Law enforcement and travel restrictions differ greatly from one region and city to another. Institutional divisions at national scale are naturally reproduced locally. With the spike in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, several municipalities have created their own crisis cells and implemented local

curfews etc., which is creating confusion and explains why the population is reluctant to comply despite the real threat that is posed.

- In mid-July, FAO and WFP launched a joint assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture, livelihoods and food value chains in Libya. The assessment is carried out by applying methods that will not put the enumerators or respondents at risk of contracting the virus (including the use of WFP's mVAM). Where there will be a need to meet key informants in person, standard operating procedures (SOPs) such as limited group sizes and physical distancing measures will be applied. Interviews with farmers have been completed and are ongoing with other actors in the value chain. The report is scheduled to be out in September.

**HRP and funding:** FSS request under HRP 2020 is currently 17.7 percent funded

**Challenges:** N/A

## **OPT**

**COVID-19 cases:** 16,844

### **Situation update:**

- All major inputs were available, although prices remained higher than pre-COVID-19 levels: most suppliers continued to accept only cash. Producers able to access informal credit to pay for inputs reported feeling overwhelmed by debt exposure and fearing for the sustainability of their business. They were also concerned about increased production costs.
- The reintroduction of preventive measures has further reduced production below pre-COVID-19 levels. Farm labour availability continued to be limited by fear of contagion and movement restrictions across checkpoints.
- Food consumption levels and coping capacities slightly deteriorated compared to the previous reporting period: parents reduced the quantity of their meals to secure food for their children, as well as borrowing food from friends or relatives.

### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:**

- Markets began to close again due to renewed movement restrictions and lockdown measures: some producers reported limited access to the few markets that were still open, as well as high prices for staples including wheat and flour, rice, vegetables, and fruit. Producers and traders reported low market demand, associated to reduced household income, movement restrictions and concerns about the economic downturn. In Gaza, fishers reported low market demand due to high prices.

### **HRP and funding:**

- As the COVID-19 response plan expired at the end of June, the Humanitarian Coordinator agreed to update just the financial requirements of the Plan. The scope will remain the same as the last iteration, so activities to be included will remain the same.

### **Challenges:**

- Discontinuation of payment of salaries due to the financial crisis of the Palestinian Authority (PA) reduced some coping capacities and presented food and nutrition security risks.
- Considering the financial crisis that the PA is facing along with the severe increase in confirmed cases, the pandemic is delivering a major negative shock to socio-economic development, putting at risk public welfare, employment and livelihoods and threatening further deterioration of poverty and food insecurity levels.

## **Whole of Syria (WoS)**

**COVID-19 cases:** 1,764

### **Situation update:**

#### Northwest Syria (NWS):

- According to Emergency Response Dashboard #13 (21 June – 21 July) 216,000 people still need to be covered by food assistance.
- There is a need to enhance complementarity between food assistance and livelihoods, in addition to livelihoods support and income-generating activities.
- In June 2020, FSL bread programmes expanded their coverage to reach beneficiaries across Idlib and Aleppo governorates. The number of organizations rose to 24 implementing partners reporting to the FSL Cluster, with plans to push the number of beneficiaries up to 1.19 million in September.
- The prices of flour and bread have fluctuated both in Aleppo and Idlib governorates: 1 kg of bread at subsidized price ranged from SYP 212 to SYP 650 in Aleppo, and SYP 225 to SYP 430 in Idlib. The unsubsidized bread price ranged from SYP 450 to SYP 1,075 in Aleppo.

#### Damascus:

- The informal exchange rate, which had increased dramatically (up to SYP 3,200/USD on 8 and 17 June) in the first couple of weeks of June stabilized around SYP 2,500/USD by the end of June and continued to gradually strengthen throughout the first half of July. By 27 July the SYP/USD informal rate stood at SYP 1,950/USD. Syria's official exchange rate stands at SYP 1,250/SYP.
- Due to a strengthening in the SYP/USD informal exchange rate from end June to mid/end July, food and non-food items experienced much lower increases in their national average prices for the first half of July. However, prices did still increase compared to June levels. Some commodities, notably fresh foods such as in-season vegetables and imported items such as sugar, reported month-on-month price decreases.
- WFP's national reference food basket price for the first half of July averaged SYP 88,900, increasing by 6% on June. Food prices have seen a gradual reduction as July progressed, linked closely to the strengthening of the informal exchange rate. The national average reference food basket price in the first half of July had increased by 137 percent compared to January 2020 (6 months ago), by 249 percent since October 2019 (start of Lebanese financial crisis), and by 261 percent year-on-year.
- The WFP Syria Corridor Office was severely damaged in the blast of 4 August. Beirut functions as a key strategic corridor for commodities bound for Syria, and Beirut Port accounts for 30 percent of incoming shipments bound for WFP's operation in Syria. Some 3,300 MT of WFP food commodities bound for Syria were en route to Beirut Port at the time of the explosion, with the first shipment scheduled to arrive on 8 August. While WFP has diverted some shipments of food following the explosions, the container terminal remains operational, and WFP in Syria is still able to use Beirut for shipments with no impact on operations at this time.
- The number of COVID-19 cases in Syria continues to grow rapidly. Some 1,400 cases have now been officially confirmed, an increase of 80 percent since the beginning of August.

### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage**

#### Northeast Syria (NES):

- Recent challenges in accessing areas with high COVID-19 cases, but only short term until local authorities clear the areas.

#### NWS:

- The main drivers of the humanitarian situation in NWS are the political and military situation, the economic crisis, the Syrian currency fluctuation, and food access. The issue of access is linked to the new UN resolution on reduced border crossings, leading to an increase in implementation costs due to higher transportation costs between Idlib and Aleppo. The security situation may push people to

flee Idlib for Aleppo, where the border (Bab Al-Salam) is not open for humanitarian aid. Road networks are also poor between Idlib and Aleppo, Deir Balut and Al-Gazawieyeh.

Damascus: Since the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions, partners have better access to operational areas. However, insecurity in some locations continues to affect access, for example in Dara in southern Syria. This has slowed implementation of food security and livelihoods projects by some partners. For example, two agencies recently lost staff in armed attacks, while one agency requested to relocate a project from Dara to another more accessible location. Syria saw a dramatic increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, with some 1,400 cases now officially confirmed, an increase of 80 percent since the beginning of August. However, the government has so far not undertaken any new lockdown measures since the escalation.

**HRP and funding:**

- USD 9 million has been allocated to the FSS through the SHF 1st standard allocation. At least 12 partners have submitted proposals to access the funds. Project proposals reviewed on 16 and 17 August.

**Challenges:**

NWS:

- Military escalation led to loss of farming and cropping land, which limited production and further increased input prices.
- There was a 22 percent increase in bread prices from April to May 2020. More than 30 percent of bakeries are no longer operational and only 58 percent of the population's minimum bread needs are being met.

Damascus:

- Rapid currency depreciation and inflation affecting the availability of food in the markets, including key commodities such as sugar and vegetable oil.
- Insecurity in some locations facing high levels of food insecurity, e.g. Dara, affecting normal implementation of food and livelihoods programmes.
- Slow levels of funding amid worsening levels of food insecurity.
- Rapid increase in new cases of COVID-19 leading to further preventive measures, decongestion of offices and extension of telecommuting measures.

## WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA UPDATES

**Cameroon**

**COVID-19 cases:** 15,173 (9,864)

**Situation update:**

- There is a growing number of people in need of urgent food assistance. In NWSW the figure now stands 1.4 million, a 66 percent increase from January 2020. The cluster's annual target is 515,180 which represents about one-third of people in need.
- More people are not being reached with food assistance despite worsening food insecurity. The collective capacities of all partners are not able to reach a greater majority of these people, calling for urgent resource mobilization to save lives and livelihoods.
- COVID-19 continues to impact deliveries of food security and livelihoods assistance.
- Markets are accessible and food prices remain stable. Many displaced communities remain without masks or PPE.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- There has been a recent increase in harassment and killings of civilians and humanitarian workers in NWSW. Access to some locations remains difficult due to check points and unlawful taxes and demand

for bribes. The FSC coverage currently stands at 269,179 against a target of 513,180. The cluster continues to make efforts to establish sub-regional cluster platforms to strengthen coordination.

**HRP and funding:**

- The cluster is 20 percent funded against a revised ask, which incorporates COVID-19, of USD 66 million. There is a large funding gap and resource mobilization has emerged as the top priority for the cluster.

**Challenges:**

- Acceptability of cash programming is currently low.
- Humanitarian access is currently very challenging.
- Funding for life-saving cluster activities is low.

**Central African Republic**

**COVID-19 cases:** 4,288 (increase from 2,222)

**Situation update:**

- Low availability of COVID-19 screening tests has led to them being carried out only in symptomatic cases, hence the difficulty of providing an exact prevalence at national level.
- Continued bad weather has limited the movement of goods and people, particularly humanitarian actors.
- Persistent inter-communal tension in the western part of the country has increased the need for humanitarian assistance.
- The UN stabilization mission (MINUSCA) has been targeted by armed groups in some areas in the northwest.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- WFP and MSF signed a memorandum for food assistance to 3,849 households affected by COVID-19/HIV/chronic diseases in two prefectures: Paoua and Carnot.
- ICCG updated its tool for collecting specific responses to COVID-19 to facilitate information management in the sector.
- Very limited financial and material resources among partners prevent them from increasing active operations.

**Chad**

**COVID-19 cases:** 946 (up from 874)

**Situation update:**

- Reopening of shops and restaurants with systematic mask wearing and social distancing required. The curfew between 8pm to 6am has been relaxed to 11pm to 5am
- Land borders are closed for people, although commercial flights have restarted. No vehicles or people can enter or leave Chad. Only vehicles transporting goods are allowed in and out from 11pm to 5am and must go directly to their warehouse.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Return to normal in UN offices gradually taking place.
- Limited number of people taking public transport or accessing banks and ATM facilities.
- Trainings, targeting, distributions and M&E are the activities most difficult implement due to social distancing and the 50-person limit established by the Government.

**HRP and funding:**

- The HRP revision including COVID-19 interventions has been launched.

- Education can't wait (WFP) – USD 300,000;
- WFP 700,000 USD for high-energy biscuits;
- The BID gave USD 20 million to ONASA (Office National de la Sécurité Alimentaire) for food stocks;
- The World Bank (WB) gave USD 22 million to WFP for food assistance;
- WB gave FAO USD 8 million for livelihoods support.

#### **Challenges:**

- The Government of Chad is preparing the election and trying to use COVID-19 response as propaganda, so politics is affecting targeting, modalities of assistance, etc.
- Not easy to organize field missions and assessments because of UN staff restrictions on movements;

#### **Nigeria**

**COVID19 cases:** 48,445 (up from 32,558)

#### **Situation update:**

- According to the CH June 2020 Updates, an additional about 600,000 people are food insecure in BAY (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe) states during this lean season (June to August) as a result of COVID-19 and its related impacts. Therefore, the updated total food insecure people in BAY states is now about 4.3 million people up from 3.7 million previously projected. Partners continue to mobilize resources for to cover the increased people in need.
- According to WFP July Monthly Market Monitoring Report for Borno and Yobe States, Nigeria's annual inflation rate rose for a tenth straight month to 12.6% in June of 2020 from 12.4% in the prior month. The prices of most staple food commodities are generally expected to remain well above average in both Borno and Yobe States during the rest of the lean season months of August and September. A slight decrease is expected thereafter. Prices of key staples saw a seasonal upturn due to a decreased availability of market stocks since July, ascribed to the lean season, the underlying high inflation and Eid celebration late July. The price increases are partially due to COVID-19 related effects.
- The **price of local rice** which has continued to **increase over three months in most markets of BAY** states with some increases ranging from 19% to 67% being the notable cases in some monitored markets. Over the last three months in BAY states, the **price of red beans** did show a significant increase in some of the markets ranging from 20% to 76% in some markets. Furthermore, the **prices of maize** increased ranging from 13% to 85% in various BAY States markets according to the WFP July 2020 Market Monitoring.
- For the first time since COVID-19 broke out, some partners have noticed an over 15 percent change in MEB threshold compared to transfer value in Kaga, Magumeri and Gubio Local Government Areas of Borno State.
- August 2017 was the time where such high prices were last reported by partners. Prices are not expected to drop since we are in the lean season

#### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Partners completed data collection to update the HEA baseline on how the livelihoods (hence incomes and food access) of urban households were affected by COVID-19. This will determine whether they can still meet 30 percent of their own food needs as before COVID-19 in urban areas, hence providing guidance on reviewing programming. Report writing ongoing.
- Partners selected to provide wet feeding at quarantine centres for returnees from Chad, the Niger and Cameroon. Project implementation to start as soon as possible.

**HRP and funding:**

- After CH updates were released indicating that only 600,000 more people will be in need in BAY due to COVID-19 (compared to the preliminary figures of 2.5 million that was used for planning from different partners), in the next round of updates of COVID-19 budget the funding requirement for food security is expected to significantly reduce.

**Challenges:**

- Food prices still relatively high
- Challenges of insecurity leading to restrictions in fertilizer movements and limited access to land.
- Floods as a result of the rain season leading to displacements and effect on crops.

**SOUTHERN AFRICA UPDATES****Mozambique****COVID-19 cases:** 2,914**Situation update:**

- The number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase, most local transmissions. Maputo City (579) and Maputo Province (354) are the most affected areas, followed by Cabo Delgado (236), Nampula (222) and Gaza (116).
- The humanitarian situation in Mozambique continues to deteriorate due to multiple crises, most recently consecutive climatic shocks (drought and floods) in central and southern parts of the country, conflict in northern parts and the COVID-19 pandemic affecting entire country and disrupting livelihoods, leading to food insecurity.
- Pre-COVID-19, the number of people estimated to be food insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance in Mozambique was 2 million. An additional 2.5 million people are estimated to be food insecure as a result of COVID-19 impacts and control measures (with 400,000 people in IPC 3 from Maputo province between June to September 2020, according to a recent SETSAN IPC analysis). This number is expected to increase further as the COVID-19 situation evolves.
- Acute IPC 3 persists in Cabo Delgado (northern), Inhambane, Gaza, northern Maputo and southern Manica (southern Mozambique) provinces, while acute IPC 2 continuous in provinces affected by cyclones and floods, especially in Sofala, Manica and Tete provinces in central Mozambique (according to FEWSNET Food Security Outlook June 2020 to January 2021).
- The acute IPC 3 outcomes are driven by drought in Southern semi-arid areas where poor rural households are facing food consumption gaps as a result of the third consecutive years of droughts, with production losses estimated at 70 percent and higher food prices. In Cabo Delgado IPC 3 outcomes are driven by conflict, with 712,000 people estimated to be in need of multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance, of which 354,000 people are estimated to be food insecure and in need of urgent humanitarian food assistance. This includes 211,500 IDPs, 100,000 people from host communities and COVID-19 pandemic caseloads.
- An IPC Analysis for seven districts in Tete and Cabo Delgado provinces were undertaken by SETSAN and the Technical Working Group. The results indicate that 135,000 people (12 percent of the population analysed) face acute food insecurity crisis (IPC Phase 3) in the seven districts between April and September 2020. It is estimated that the number of people who will be in acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) will increase to 285,000 (26 percent of the population analysed) between October and November 2020.
- A Food and Nutrition Security Baseline study coordinated by SETSAN (normally undertaken every five years to measure the impact of policies, strategies and programmes and update the levels of chronic

food insecurity and chronic malnutrition in rural, urban and peri-urban areas) is being planned and data collection involving about 21,000 samples will be collected between October to November 2020

- In Cabo Delgado Province, a rapid multi-sectoral assessment took place in mid-July, in light of the government's urgent decision to relocate IDPs (1,900 families), currently in Metuge District, to new accommodation site in Ngalane. Results of the assessment, which includes findings related to gaps in the access of basic services, such as: access to water, electricity, health, education and markets, were presented to the local authorities in a meeting which took place on 17 July. Humanitarian actors in Cabo Delgado are following up with authorities to verify that basic standards are applied in the relocation process, thus ensuring that IDPs are relocated in an informed, voluntary and dignified manner.
- The above situation is further exacerbated by underlying factors affecting food security of Mozambican including high poverty rate (62 percent of the population living below the poverty line of USD 1.90 per day), high child (under 5 years old) malnutrition rate (43 percent) and HIV prevalence rate at 12.5 percent.

#### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- FSC partners reached 388,324 food-insecure people with food assistance in July 2020, out of a planned 420,180 (of which 94 percent provided by WFP).
- FSC partners plan to assist about 583,820 food-insecure people in August 2020 (of which 97 percent planned by WFP for August 2020).
- 357,217 people were provided livelihood assistance during the winter agricultural season from April to July 2020 by FSC partners. An additional 11,024 are planned to be assisted by livelihood partners between August and November 2020.
- One of the major gaps is limited funding to respond to diverse needs due to different shocks affecting the country concurrently. Needs like those of the drought are not covered by any response plan at the moment.

#### **HRP and funding:**

- CERF underfunded window allocated USD 7 million to Mozambique. HCT decided to allocate the above amount for Cabo Delgado in response to the humanitarian impacts of armed violence. Cluster specific allocations are being discussed for in Northern Mozambique covering multisectoral assistance.

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**COVID-19 cases:** 9,706

#### **Situation update:**

- The harvest period in most of the country's provinces led to mainly stable or lower prices this month as well as last month.
- Just like in June, the exchange rate depreciated again (USD 1 is worth on average FC 1,957 FC in July against FC 1,905 in June), an increase of 2.73 percent compared to last month. In January, the exchange rate was USD 1 against FC 1.611. If this trend continues, it could have a negative impact on the price of products on the markets.
- In Ituri, the presence of the FPIC and ADF armed groups in Irumu territory (with more than 14,173 displaced people fled to Walendu Bindi) as well as the CADECO militia in the territory of Djugu, disrupted availability of products in markets with a detrimental effect on prices.
- The drop in purchasing power is explained by the drop in the daily remuneration for field work as well as the increase in the cost of the cassava-based food basket. Access to food baskets made from maize

and / or cassava is very difficult in Kasai Central (Dibaya, Luiza), South Kivu (Fizi, Mwenga) and Tshuapa (Boende, Bokungu).

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Humanitarian access remains critical in some of the main hotspots across the country (Ituri, Kivus, Tanganika). This is not directly related to the COVID-19 impacts.
- FSC is still collecting all the requested information related to 2020 Q2 - by the end of August analyses on FS responses, gaps (against the revised HRP), and main trends will be available.

**HRP and funding:**

- According to the FTS, the DRC HRP current funding level is 21% (USD 443 million funded of USD 2069 million required). From an FSC perspective, USD 131 million has been funded against USD 888 million required.
- Three HF allocations are currently ongoing: standard allocation (USD 49 million, USD 14 million allocated to the FSC); reserve allocation related to the degradation of the humanitarian situation in Ituri (USD 4 million, USD 1.5 million allocated to the FSC)

## LATIN AMERICA UPDATES

### Haiti

**COVID-19 cases:** 7,897

**Situation update:**

- The drop in COVID-19 cases persists across the country, although the virus is still circulating in the country. A new increase in cases in the next weeks cannot be ruled out due to several factors: the re-opening of airports, the reduction of curfew hours, the imminent opening of schools, and the continuous movement of people across the border with the Dominican Republic
- The situation related to food prices in Haiti remains a concern, less on the availability of food products which is generally satisfactory, but more in terms of prices. According to the latest Food Basket Bulletin, the value of the food basket has grown 29 percent on an annual basis. The increase of food prices is directly linked to the peak period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the slowdown in economic activity and the closure of borders. This development is also explained by the strong depreciation of the Gourde against the US Dollar (-12 percent between April and June 2020) in a context of strong dependency on food imports.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has equally impacted the socio-economic scenario in rural areas across the country, where the demand for rural labour has considerably decreased due to the economic downturn. This situation has been exacerbated by the increased flow of Haitian migrants arriving from the Dominican Republic and the closure of schools. Rural labour represents an important source of income for poor households in Haiti. In addition, below-average rains since the end of March have slowed agricultural activities across the country, with most regions not yet planting crops for the spring season.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- FAO is reinforcing its community engagement activities through rural community radios in Grande Anse (Jérémie), Nippes (Fonds des Nègres or Miragoane), Nord-Est (Fort Liberté and Ouanaminthe), Nord-ouest (Port de Paix) to:
  - (i) disseminate information on preventive measures to avoid the spread of COVID-19;
  - (ii) raise awareness for 1,000 community actors (civil and religious leaders) and their families (5,000 people) to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
  - (iii) distribute 13,000 hygiene kits (masks, alcohol and soap);

- (iv) collect data on the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture and food security in collaboration with WFP, CNSA and ISAI.
- In support of the joint COVID-19 response, WFP continues to provide essential transport and storage services to the humanitarian community and government counterparts, including surface, air and sea transport services. Logistics coordination and information-sharing mechanisms are in place to optimize limited resources. Since 1 May, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) helicopter managed by the WFP has carried 406 passengers and 3,550 kg of cargo.
- To ensure alternative transport and improve access to the areas where the most vulnerable people are, ATLAS Logistique (an operational branch of the NGO Humanity & Inclusion) will launch the Mer Logistique Urgence Haïti (MERLUH) a project in partnership with the NGO AQUADEV by the beginning of September. The project will provide regular and free maritime transport services by cabotage to the humanitarian community as well as storage services.
- Latest update on needs coverage highlights significant gaps, with 633.00 beneficiaries expected to be reached by the end of the year, out of a total target 1.56 million people, so the coverage would be around 40 percent.

## **Colombia**

**COVID-19 cases:** 476,660

### **Situation update:**

- Increased displacement due to armed violence in various departments of the country (Norte de Santander, Nariño, Antioquia, Chocó) may further exacerbate food insecurity in the country, creating multiple effects in a context of loss of livelihoods due to the pandemic. Preliminary projections from WFP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean indicate that severe food insecurity in Colombia could reach 3 million people, including Venezuelan migrants, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. If people who may be moderately food insecure are included, the figure rises to 10 million people, including 84 percent of the migrants in the country.
- WFP continues to receive requests for food assistance for people affected by the socio-economic effects of COVID-19. Since the beginning of the crisis, requests for temporary assistance have been received for more than 1.2 million vulnerable people in 13 departments. Additional funding is urgently required to meet the most pressing food needs of some 550,000 people, in close coordination with national and local authorities.
- In the months of May and June FAO reported that in the departments of Nariño, Chocó, La Guajira and Putumayo there are challenges in acquiring and marketing food and agricultural inputs, as well as variations in their prices. This situation is possibly associated with movement restrictions adopted to prevent the spread of COVID-19. There has been a shortage of cereals such as pasta, corn, flour and rice, as well as some vegetables and eggs.

### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- In response to the launch of the PRASS strategy (Sustainable Selective Testing, Tracking & Isolation) by the Colombian government, WFP has decided to support this important initiative specifically to help ensure the food security of isolated families. The assistance will begin with monetary transfers in the cities of Montería and Palmira between the months of August and September with a progressive expansion to other areas prioritized by the strategy. WFP intends to serve more than 100,000 people during their period of isolation, in close collaboration with the Management for Comprehensive Care of the COVID-19 pandemic, with an investment of around USD 2 million.
- WFP is implementing a significant expansion of its assistance to migrants and host communities in the third quarter of the year, this due to the growing needs derived from COVID-19. WFP aims to reach around 380,000 people each month starting in July through vouchers, cash transfers, the provision of

school meals, the delivery of ready-to-eat kits and hot meals, as well as the delivery of food baskets in kind, a modality in which assistance is increasing by almost 50 percent compared to previous months and seeks to reach 50,000 people in the most remote areas of La Guajira.

- WFP in collaboration with GIFMM and implementing partners provides emergency assistance to migrants with the intention of returning in key points of the country, in line with the guidelines of the national government: some 9,500 people in Nariño, Norte de Santander, Arauca and La Guajira receive kits of food, many of whom also receive hot meals in shelters and migrant care centres: for example, in Norte de Santander, WFP provides hot meals to about 500 people a day at the Tienditas Health Care Center; in Pasto and Ipiales, some 2,500 people also receive hot meals.
- FAO continues with remote monitoring of families affected by pre-COVID-19 emergencies in the departments of Córdoba, Chocó, La Guajira, Nariño and Putumayo. Risk reduction techniques have been shared for the establishment and management of food and vegetable crops at the family level and agricultural production initiatives. Likewise, guidelines for adequate eating habits have been promoted, in order to provide communities with strategies for optimal biological use of food.
- The commercialization of local products has been promoted, which seeks to facilitate access to food in the territories and contribute to the generation of income and improve the purchasing power of families.
- Remote monitoring has allowed the communities where the projects are being developed to use agricultural inputs appropriately, ensure food production at the community and family level, and to respond to situations of price hikes, shortages and movement restrictions.
- FAO has been supporting public and private entities in the elaboration of strategies that allow the implementation of tools for supply, productive ordering, strengthening of producer organizations and food and nutritional security.
- FAO is creating biosafety protocols to continue providing face-to-face support to communities benefiting from technical strengthening projects. In the same way, market initiatives are being put in place, based on information from surveys carried out with producers, organizations and merchants in 20 departments of Colombia to know the food supply chain in the country in the current context of COVID-19.

#### **HRP and funding:**

- WFP requires USD 96 million to increase the levels of assistance in accordance with the most urgent needs in the next six months, particularly to the Colombian populations most affected by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.
- Other FSC partners also require financial resources to be able to serve the affected population.

## **EASTERN AFRICA UPDATES**

### **Ethiopia**

**COVID cases:** 31,336

#### **Situation update:**

- Flooding has contributed to increased food insecurity in Oromia, Afar, SNNP and Somali regions. It is estimated that 124,219 people were affected by floods in previous weeks and an additional 53,158 were displaced from low-lying areas (OCHA-Humanitarian Bulletin)
- Data analysis for IPC was conducted in the first week of August, coinciding with the review of the 2020 HRP.

### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Actors involved in food distributions allocated double cash/food rations to cover March, April and May 2020. Currently double distributions of food and cash assistance are ongoing for June, July and August 2020.
- Various measures are being implemented by FSC partners to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including physical/social distancing and provision of hygiene facilities at distribution points.

### **HRP and funding:**

- Ethiopia is appealing for USD 285 million for COVID-19 related food needs and an additional USD 489 million for non-COVID-19 food requirements. There are indications of significant funding gaps (FTS - [link](#)).
- The mid-year review of the 2020 HRP is ongoing, which will include an update of food needs for various populations, that are likely to face food consumption gaps in the second half of 2020.

### **Challenges:**

- Multiple hazards are likely to contribute to increased food needs in the country, including the negative impact of the desert locust and COVID-19 on food systems as well as existing humanitarian needs among displaced people.

## **South Sudan**

**COVID cases:** 2,490

### **Situation update:**

- The overall situation has not improved, there is still low uptake on the use of cloth face masks and a very low adherence to prevention measures. However, the humanitarian community continues to enforce the SOP both internally and externally.
- Market prices of food commodities have risen considerably, not just due to the pandemic restrictions but also seasonal rains coupled with the depreciation of local currency and depleted stocks from the recent harvest.
- Generally, the SSP remains at low value against the US dollar. One dollar is exchanged at SSP 355.

### **Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- Humanitarian access remains a challenge not just due to COVID-19 but also flooding and pockets of insecurity.
- There are food security gaps in locations that are inaccessible to NGOs due to insecurity.
- FSL partners continue to adjust to the “new normal” in the light of the current situation. Many national FSL partners struggle to adhere the COVID-19 SOPs provided by the donors and their lack of budgets.

### **HRP and funding:**

- The 2021 HNO/HRP process has started, and initial discussions are being held on the costing methodology.

## **Somalia**

**COVID-19 cases:** 3,257

### **Situation update:**

- An estimated 3.4 million people are in IPC 3 and 4 through September 2020 due to the cumulative and combined effect of desert locusts, flooding, COVID-19 as well as other recurrent shocks. However, mainly due to access challenges, the FSC target is to reach 3 million of the 3.4 million people in need.
- The Somalia WFP Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update for second week of August 2020 highlighted the following:

- Scarcity of fruits and vegetables such as bananas, tomatoes, onions, mangos and watermelons continues in most regions, however availability has improved and prices are normal in northwest regions.
  - Heavy downpours and storms in some regions have affected farmland, destroyed, markets, properties and disrupted transport services.
  - Fuel prices have increased in some regions (Banadir and Northwest) but remain low reflecting the global trend.
  - Livestock prices (goats and sheep) continue to decline in most markets due to decreased demand.
- In terms of assessing the food security situation, FSNAU is currently conducting face-to-face household surveys/food security and nutrition assessments covering displaced, urban and rural populations. COVID-19 guidelines are being followed for field work.

**Humanitarian access and Operational coverage and changes:**

- In the month of July, a total of twenty-one partners reported various food security responses.
- Under objective 1 (Improved access to food and safety nets), FSC partners assisted 1.8 million people out of 3 million targeted (62 percent achievement). Responses in Middle Juba, Banadir and Lower Shabelle are less than 25 percent of the target due to both access and funding shortfalls.
- Objective 2 (Provision of seasonal livelihood inputs): during the month of July, FSC partners assisted 31,368 beneficiaries with seasonal inputs and livestock asset protection. Cumulatively, starting February, a total of 433,368 beneficiaries have been assisted with farm inputs, land preparation and animal restocking (shoats). The cumulative number of people reached accounts for 48 percent of the seasonal target (909,130), with July being the last month of the season. Bari, Galgaduud, Middle Juba, Mudug, Nugaal, Sanaag, Sool and Toghdheer responses are below 15 percent of the target due to a combination of funding and access.

**HRP and funding:**

- The FSC HRP is 74 percent funded. Nevertheless, this is based on revised HRP where most partners un-earmarked resources they had not received first half of the year. Of note, the actual responses are around 62 percent. Low achievements in terms of responses compared to funding status (as per FTS) also reflect contributions recently confirmed and would not have been available to programme in July.

**Challenges:**

- In general, COVID-19 is affecting project implementation due to limited movements/field visits to supervise ongoing project activities. Registration and verification of the beneficiaries required more time for some of the partners due to COVID-19 measures on maintaining social distancing and working more with the village committees to avoid crowd in the communities.
- Most partners either postponed, suspended or are in the process of reprogramming project activities involving gatherings of people and in close contact that increase the risk of exposure for beneficiaries and staff. Cash for work, vocational training and in-kind distributions were the most affected.
- Delayed approval of some of the submitted proposal to donors due to global pandemic and changing priorities and availability of resources.