



FSC monthly sitrep

COVID-19 Situation Update 14th August to 13th September 2020

Summary

Asia & Pacific

In **Afghanistan**, continued ad-hoc closures of border crossings with Pakistan and delays at Karachi port due to administrative impediments continue to cause partial supply pipeline interruptions of staple goods, including vegetable oil and pulses, forcing adjustments to the humanitarian food basket. In **Cox's bazar**, food assistance to Rohingya refugees and scaled-up e-voucher assistance is almost complete. Self-reliance activities for refugees in the camps have resumed, with a limited number of staff and COVID-19 prevention measures in place. Most **Pacific** countries are still under lockdown with borders closed to international arrivals, although cargo is still permitted so food and agricultural products can be delivered in the region.

East Africa

In **Somalia**, there is improved access to food for people affected by various shocks and in Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification (IPC) levels 3 and 4: FSC partners assisted more than 1.6 million people against a target of 3 million. The provision of inputs for the *Deyr* season will run from August 2020 to January 2021. In **South Sudan**, heightened levels of vulnerability in the Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity and Lakes regions have been compounded by COVID-19 disruptions to supply chains, the macro-economic crisis/currency devaluation (comparable to 2016/2017), flooding and conflict. Very serious levels of food insecurity and poor outcome indicators are expected by the time of the delayed IPC analysis. In **Ethiopia**, flooding in low-lying areas and an influx of returnees from neighbouring countries have persisted, increasing the number of people in need of food and cash assistance.

Latin America

In **Haiti**, the recent IPC analysis showed that between August 2020 and February 2021, 42 percent of the population (around 4 million people) are facing crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phases 3 and 4) and are in need of urgent assistance. This is an increase on the previous analysis, in which 35 percent of the population were in this situation. Inflation, exchange rate deteriorations, reduced remittances, poor harvests, as well as the impact of hurricane Laura and the COVID-19 pandemic, represent the main drivers of food insecurity. In **Colombia**, despite reaching 85 percent of the targeted population, Venezuelan migrants and refugees continue to face difficulties in accessing food, with over 90

percent of households reporting not being able to afford food. In **Venezuela** (Bolivarian Republic of), fuel shortages continue to affect the agricultural sector, impacting food production and availability in country. Planted areas of corn and rice are estimated to be 40 and 50 percent smaller respectively than last year.

Near East and Eastern Europe

In **Lebanon**, as a result of the Beirut Port blast on 4 August, a flash appeal has been launched to respond to needs in areas impacted by the blast. The food security sector (FSS) and its partners (21 appealing partners) plan to reach 300,000 individuals impacted by the explosion and require USD 100 million. In the **occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT)**, increasing numbers of households are unable to meet their basic food needs, and small-scale agriculture continues to face a crisis. Heavy rainfall has intensified in **the Sudan** over the past week, causing more flooding, displacement and death and leading the Government to declare a three-month State of Emergency in the country. 650,000 people have been affected since the start of the rains in mid-July, more than 110,000 in the first week of September alone, according to the Government's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). In **Ukraine**, people waiting to cross the contact line at the Exit-Entry Check Point (EECP) are facing humanitarian needs, especially when cases of COVID-19 are detected. The FSS and its partners are responding to those needs.

Southern Africa

In **Mozambique**, 3.9 million people are estimated to be acutely food insecure – an increase of 2.4 million on the pre-COVID-19 situation (1.5 million people). FSC partners are scaling up their response, particularly food assistance in preparation for upcoming lean season starting in October/November 2020. However, limited funding risks leading to pipeline breaks (expected in October unless new contributions are received) and hampering food security response, especially for COVID-19 and drought-affected areas. In **the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, the recent IPC analysis showed that 21.8 million people (33 percent of the population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in IPC Phase 3 or 4 (Crisis or worse). This represent a slight increase compared to the previous analysis, in which 28 percent of the population were in this situation. The main drivers of food insecurity are conflict, COVID-19, flooding and economic decline. In **Zimbabwe**, the number of food-insecure people in urban and rural areas is expected to rise to respectively 3.3 million people (up from 2.2 million this time last year) and 5.3 million (up from 3.7 million). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent drought-hit harvest are the main drivers in the respective areas.

West and Central Africa

In the Sahel region, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated an unstable situation. In **Burkina Faso**, the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) of July 2020 outlined that [3.3 million people face acute food insecurity](#). This is an increase of over 50 percent on the forecasted situation during the last CH analysis in March 2020. In **North West and South West (NWSW) Cameroon**, the COVID-19 situation has had a huge impact on the logistics and supply chains involved in distributing in-kind support, leading several food security partners to explore the possibility of shifting to cash inputs. In **Mali**, following the resignation of President Keita on 18 August due to a military coup, restrictions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), including border closures and suspended financial, commercial and economic transactions will likely affect cash-based transfer response, meaning prices could increase.

The security situation remains volatile in **NWSW Cameroon, Mali and Niger** due to the presence and continued activity of Non-State Armed groups (NSAGs).

In **Mali, the Niger and Nigeria**, heavy rains were registered and caused flooding, impacting over 5,000 households in the Niger and 4,000 in Mali and affecting 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs). In **Nigeria**, the annual inflation rate surged for an eleventh month straight.

ASIA AND PACIFIC UPDATES

Afghanistan

Situation update:

- Cases continue to rise slowly, however government partners are now on a regular work cycle and UN and partner staff are returning to work while observing COVID-19 prevention measures.
- The relaxing of COVID-19 movement restrictions is having a positive impact on the seasonal agricultural workforce and leading to minor improvements in the purchasing power of smallholders and landless labourers. Nonetheless, increased prices of staple goods and logistical bottlenecks continue to affect food availability and access.
- Staple goods are still between 9 and 29 percent higher than pre-COVID-19 price points, with households reportedly resorting to negative coping strategies such as reducing caloric intake and skipping meals.

Operational update:

- Lower disease infection rates among staff has allowed group activities to restart, such as communal asset creation and technical agricultural and vocational trainings.
- Ad-hoc closures of border crossings with Pakistan and delays at Karachi port due to administrative impediments continue to cause partial supply pipeline suspensions of key staple goods, including vegetable oil and pulses, forcing adjustments to the humanitarian food basket. Authorities in both Pakistan and Afghanistan are called on to develop harmonized and fast-track procedures to facilitate the movement of lifesaving goods.
- Shortfalls of nutritious wheat-soya blend and vegetable oil continue to affect food basket composition. Partners report a worsening situation in Afghan households' dietary diversity and negative coping practices, which will have repercussions on beneficiaries' health and resistance to illness.

HRP: Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) HRP of USD 370 million currently funded at 21 percent – leaving a gap of USD 294 million.

Challenges

- Food security partners are focused on providing critical inputs for the most vulnerable ahead of the upcoming winter/lean season. Although there is more availability of staple foods such as wheat as local production comes to market, higher prices due to COVID-19 will limit household capacity to build up necessary food stocks for the lean season.
- Peace talks are starting in Doha, which were delayed due to last-minute disagreements. These talks will hopefully cover improved access to district centres that have been encircled, as well as other areas where there is low access by humanitarian actors, ensuring the participation of vulnerable segments of society in recovery planning.
- Higher levels of debt, reduced income levels, and greater household expenditures are expected this year due to the increased pressure from COVID-19. The impact of this latest shock on food

security and livelihoods will be an important factor in the upcoming SFSA/IPC analysis anticipated to be completed in late September.

Cox's Bazar

Situation update:

- COVID-19 cases have increased in the camps, according to [latest WHO update](#) (13 percent of total confirmed cases since March were reported in one day on 9 September). Cases among humanitarian workers are also on the rise.
- According to the [Urban Vulnerability Assessment Report](#):
 - Overall income decreased by 42 percent: daily labourers were most affected, losing 70 percent of their income.
 - Income levels decreased sharply in March and started to increase in June, in correlation with the lockdown measures put in place.
 - 52 percent had consumption rates below the MEB, with around 30 percent below the food MEB.
 - Female-headed households were disproportionately affected, with 47 percent being highly vulnerable (up from 19 percent pre-crisis). This was potentially driven by lockdown-induced movement restrictions on women due to social and cultural barriers.
 - Overall drop in food expenditure was 48 percent.

Operational update:

- Food assistance to Rohingya refugees: scale-up of e-voucher assistance is almost complete, with 94 percent of households due to receive 14 food items (nutritionally complete) and 100 percent receiving high-energy biscuits and Super Cereal for extra nutrition. For refugees who are still under generalized food distributions (GFD), partners are providing complementary food vouchers to enable access to fresh food. Fresh food corners (with locally-produced protein sources) at food assistance facilities are planned to resume from October, targeting locations where there are GFD beneficiaries first.
- Self-reliance activities such as seed distributions and cash-for-work mask-making programmes for refugees in the camps have resumed, with a limited number of staff and with COVID-19 prevention measures in place (e.g. up to 10 people allowed to gather).
- Livelihoods support to host communities has resumed and partners are increasingly expanding coverage of vulnerable Bangladeshi households in northern sub-districts of Cox's Bazar and in Ukhiya and Teknaf where refugees are hosted

HRP:

As of 13 September:

- JRP: USD 141.3 million (55%) funded – 1% increase since last reporting period
- COVID-19: 1.4 million (3%) funded – 1% increase since last reporting period

Challenges:

- Information gaps/lack of evidence in new areas of operation due to low humanitarian footprint (e.g. poverty line and MEB for beneficiary selection)
- Lack of harmonized targeting criteria to inform new partners and technical guidance on agriculture interventions in particular.
- Lack of comprehensive data on households with disabled persons to inform targeting, despite recent discourse on disability and inclusion.

Pacific:

Situation update:

- Most Pacific countries still under lockdown with borders closed to international arrivals
- Cargo still permitted so food and agricultural products can be delivered in the region
- Pacific Logistics Cluster has good data on cargo, flights tracking
- <https://logcluster.org/ops/pacific>

Operational update:

- Initial conversations taking place to set up fisheries working group (WFP and FAO)
- rPFSC providing IM support to Fiji Cash Working Group
- rPFSC contributed food security project descriptions to Pacific SERP document

HRP:

- Socio-Economic Response Plan (SERP) seems to be supplanting existing HRP in terms of new and ongoing funding appeals.

Challenges

- Coordination with OCHA/Pacific Humanitarian teams across two Resident Coordinator's Offices (RCOs) in Fiji and Samoa (14 countries) continues to be challenging.
- There was a problem initially with not having a multisector, multi-country impact assessment for COVID-19 and tropical cyclone Harold, so the subsequent HRP lacked links to needs.
- A socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) was conducted in some countries by UN organizations such as ILO and IOM. The SERP was produced from this, with a lot of country gaps in the impact assessment.

NEAR EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE UPDATES

Lebanon

COVID-19 cases: 25,449

Situation update:

As a result of the 4 August Beirut Port blast, a flash appeal was launched to respond to needs in areas impacted. The FSS and its partners (21 appealing partners) plan to reach 300,000 individuals impacted by the explosion and require USD 100 million. An [advocacy note](#) has been produced and disseminated to highlight the needs and requirements for the FSS for the LCRP, COVID-19 and Blast response.

Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:

- Since the beginning of the response for the blast, with the support of 32 reporting partners the FSS was able to reach households with food and cash assistance and support for MSME rehabilitation. Overall, 74,600 ready-to-eat meals have been provided, while community kitchens continue to operate in the most vulnerable areas. In addition, food parcels and vouchers have been distributed to 22,000 households, cash-based assistance to more than 1,100 households and 195 MSMEs rehabilitated.
- Offloading of the WFP shipment of 12,500 metric tonnes of wheat flour has been completed in response to the loss of 15,000 metric tonnes of grain stocks stored in the silos affected by the explosion. The wheat flour will be delivered to the contracted millers across the country. Under the

Nutrition Task Force, 4,088 women were provided with Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling and [SoPs on IYCF](#) have been produced and disseminated.

- Under the COVID-19 response, food assistance continues to be provided across Lebanon and in COVID-19 confirmed/isolated cases, in informal settlements/collective shelters and targeting migrant workers.

HRP and funding:

Blast Appeal: USD 17.6 million received out of USD 100 million required (17.5 percent). COVID-19 Response (intersectoral): USD 47.6 million received out of USD 136.5 million required (35 percent)

oPT

COVID-19 cases: 40,298

Situation update:

- **Increasing number of households unable to meet basic food needs due to COVID-19 crisis**

Beyond those directly infected by the virus, tens of thousands of people are affected by the restrictions in place due to loss of jobs and consequent reduced capacity to address their basic food needs. If this trend continues, more households will be in need of direct food assistance, and those already in need will require increased support to cope with the increased severity of their food insecurity status.

New categories of food-insecure households are being reported, for example day labourers and taxi drivers. In addition, civil servants are facing an unprecedented financial crisis. It is worth noting that the current situation is exacerbating household vulnerabilities, especially in the Gaza Strip. According to the latest SEFSec survey, 1.7 million people who were food insecure pre-COVID-19 are still in need of food assistance for the coming three months. Those in greatest need are already in the most vulnerable groups, such as people living in overcrowded conditions, poor and food-insecure people, and unskilled labourers and marginal groups such as the elderly and the disabled. People in poor areas of Gaza face a higher risk of contagion due to the precarious sanitation systems. The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) released the Gaza COVID-19 response plan in September, mainly focused on food assistance interventions.

- **Small-scale agricultural activities continue to face crisis**

Farmers, herders, breeders, and fishers are exposed to high stress due to COVID-19 restrictions. Although the agricultural system is overall holding and stabilizing despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 crisis, many small-scale farmers are still facing major problems. Markets along national agri-food supply chains are starting to stabilize, also thanks to interventions that guarantee access to farms and markets as well as continuity of international trade. However, disruptions have been observed for vulnerable groups, while restrictions are having impact also on usually food-secure sections of society. A few issues are still hindering agricultural sectors: labour is not as available as before; certain production inputs are either lacking or costly; land cannot always be reached easily; permits to farmers are not always issued on time; some crops were not harvested on time, and not all poultry production is being sold at the right time; among beekeepers, some report limited ability to attend to their beehives; fishers cannot operate at all during the lockdown.

Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:

- Access is becoming more challenging. FSS partner staff need special permits to move around in the field to carry out project activities. The situation is becoming particularly difficult in the Gaza Strip, where humanitarian organizations are allowed only a limited number of staff to be in the field, and only for urgent issues.

Challenges:

Increase in unemployment, poverty and input prices, with new categories falling into poverty and agricultural value chains disrupted, have increased food insecurity at household level and threaten the survival of small-scale production. It is challenging to follow the volatile situation due to COVID-19, with waves of increased contagion and restrictions in place.

The Sudan

COVID-19 cases: 13,535

Situation update:

- Heavy rainfall has intensified in the Sudan over the past week, causing more flooding, displacement and deaths, and leading the Government to declare a three-month State of Emergency in the country. 650,000 people have been affected since the start of the rains in mid-July, more than 110,000 in the first week of September alone, according to the Government's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). Floods also destroyed 1,700 ha of agricultural land, 179 public facilities (schools, health centres, and government offices), 359 shops and warehouses, and killed 5,500 head of livestock. Approximately 43 percent of all people affected are in Khartoum, North Darfur, and Sennar states. HAC warned that more flood-related damages are anticipated in the coming few days in the River Nile and Northern states.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- The FSS has continued coordination with all partners to respond to the floods, distributing food baskets and cash. Overall gaps identified in different locations in the Sudan due to floods and COVID-19 are physical access to affected areas, lack of access to information due to network problems, and fuel shortages.
- For the HNO 2021 process and based on different food security assessments, the most vulnerable groups are IDPs, returnees, refugees and host communities. In order to identify basic needs, groups of indicators are identified that cover a range of food security standards to measure the response of each population group. A severity scale is then applied to each indicator in order to improve the response and fill any gaps in planning and coverage. These are: IPC indicators, which depend on convergence of direct and indirect evidence from a variety of data sources and processing indicators; the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), which is a qualitative measure of food consumption that reflects household access to a variety of foods; and the Food Expenditure Share, focused on the proportion of total household earnings spent on food.
- The FSS launched an activity-based costing exercise for the 2021 HRP in order to identify necessary humanitarian activities and an estimated budget for their implementation.

HRP and funding:

FSS allocation until June 2020 reached (USD 12.7 million) under the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) allocation and (USD 22.8 million) under CERF allocation.

Ukraine

COVID-19 cases: 162,660

Situation update:

People who are waiting to cross the contact line at the Exit-Entry Check Point (EECP) need humanitarian assistance, including food. Those crossing into Government-Controlled Areas (GCA) must download the

recommended application on their smartphones or be kept in an observation area until tested negative for COVID-19. During this period, local authorities requested support from the Cluster. For example, in August one person at the facility in the Donetsk GCA tested positive for COVID-19, hence grounding all 20 occupants for 14 days and triggering the need for food assistance. The Danish Demining Group (DDG) is responding to this food request.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

FSLC partners continue to provide food assistance, specifically designed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March, FSLC partners collectively assisted through:

- home distributions of food kits to 9,889 most vulnerable people with disabilities, chronic illnesses, the elderly, and those living in isolated settlements.
- cash and vouchers for food support to 1,552 beneficiaries, as partners scale up response to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- In-kind food assistance for 4,967 beneficiaries as partners scale up response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Although vouchers for food assistance are being provided in Non-GCA, access remains restricted so the response gap is significant.

HRP and funding:

Immediate food assistance was provided to over 70 percent of people in response to COVID-19 from a country-based pooled fund (Ukrainian Humanitarian Fund). According to the Financial Tracking Service, as of September 10 funding progress for FSLC in Ukraine is at nearly 4 percent (USD 300,000 of USD 9.2 million requested).

Challenges:

- FAO as a lead agency in Ukraine has no seat at the HCT. Thus, food security-related issues often are off the agenda.
- Need to review food basket composition and value related to price changes.
- Actions of local authorities and partners related to response to the needs of people in observation facilities and at EECs need s effective coordination.

WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA UPDATES

Burkina Faso

COVID-19 cases: 1,733

Situation update:

- The results of the July CH focused on updating household food security indicators following COVID-19, reporting that [3.3 million people face crisis or worse acute food insecurity](#). A total of 16 provinces are in Phase 3 (Crisis) and two provinces in the Sahel region (Soum and Oudalan provinces), are in Phase 4 (Emergency) and need rapid assistance. Pockets of populations in Phase 5 (Catastrophe) are reported in Soum (over 5,000 people) and Oudalan (some 6,000 people). This marks an over 50 percent increase on the March 2020 CH assessment.
- There is an urgent need for humanitarian assistance to address immediate needs while remaining committed to longer-term investments. Analysis of livelihood-based coping strategies revealed that most households have reduced capacity to cope with future shocks due to limited resources. Preliminary results also show that: (i) 50 percent of households have limited food consumption and 31 percent have poor food consumption; (ii) the dietary situation of children aged 6-59 months is

alarming, suggesting a fairly high risk of malnutrition in this category of the population; and (iii) measures enacted by the Government to counter the spread of COVID-19 had an additional impact on the household food situation. Results indicated that 92 percent of households reported difficulties in accessing markets, 82 percent were not able to meet their food needs, and 70 percent had lost their jobs.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- The security situation remains extremely volatile, especially in the Centre-North, East, North, and Sahel regions. In the Sahel region, access to Djibo is constrained due to insecurity and non-state armed group (NSAG) check-points, which occasionally prohibit the entry and exit of public transport and freight trucks to and from Djibo.
- FSC actors are planning support in Oudalan.

HRP and funding: NtR

Challenges: Funding remains the main challenge.

Cameroon

COVID-19 cases: 20,167 (up from 15,173)

Situation update:

- The situation in NWSW Cameroon was reported to be very tense, with NSAGs imposing lockdowns that have affected humanitarian assistance.
- The food security situation remains precarious due to several displacements in NWSW, with women and children the most vulnerable groups.
- The number of new COVID-19 cases is rising steadily in NWSW.
- Markets are still relatively accessible, with prices of basic commodities stable.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- Humanitarian access is currently a major challenge due to attacks on and harassment of some humanitarian workers along with illegal checkpoints. Food security response has assisted 246,000 people in the NWSW region, 90 percent of which was food assistance and 10 percent agriculture and livelihoods support.
- The COVID-19 situation has had a huge impact on the logistics and supply chains involved in distributing in-kind support, leading several food security partners to explore the possibility of shifting to cash. The cash working group has been engaging the local government in the region to ensure that partners that shift to cash do not face any challenges. The government has emphasised the need for transparency and sharing of reports to ensure that cash is delivered to the targeted households and not diverted to the 'wrong' hands.

HRP and funding:

Only five partners have received direct funding for COVID-19 support. The food security response is only 20 percent funded.

Challenges:

- Humanitarian access
- Funding of lifesaving activities still very low
- Logistical issues in delivering in-kind assistance

Central African Republic

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

Situation update:

- FSC has requested a COVID-19 case-map from the Health cluster, which has not yet responded
- Multisector needs assessment (MSNA): results available as of 7 September
- IPC: starts mid-September as planned, for which FSC is in process of collecting agricultural data

Chad

COVID-19 cases: 1,051 (up from 946)

Situation update:

- Reopening of shops and restaurants, with systematic respect of mask wearing and social distancing required. The curfew between 8pm to 6am has been reduced to 11pm to 5am.
- Land borders are closed for people, despite the commercial flights resuming. 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.
- Limited number of people taking public transport or accessing banks or ATMs.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

Trainings, targeting, distribution and M&E are the activities most difficult to implement because of social distancing and the 50-person limit established by the Government.

Mali

COVID-19 cases: 2,940

Situation update:

- Following the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on 18 August due to a military coup, the imposed ECOWAS restrictions including border closures and suspensions of financial, commercial and economic transactions will likely affect WFP cash-based transfers and nutrition response for some 12,800 beneficiaries.
- The security situation remains volatile in northern and central Mali due to the presence and continued activity of NSAGs. In addition, heavy rains registered in Mali over the last few weeks caused flooding that has affected 4,000 households (26,700 people) in Gao, Kayes, Kidal, Menaka, Ségou and Timbuktu. Projections from the national contingency plan indicates that 121,000 people in the country would be affected by floods during the ongoing rainy season.

Humanitarian access and Operational update: NtR

HRP and funding:

CH will be conducted in November, HNO in November and HRP in December

Challenges: Funding remains the main challenge.

The Niger

COVID-19 cases: 1,182

Situation update:

Floods affected 432,613 people (52 404 households), mainly in the Agadez, Maradi and Niamey regions, as well as damaging over 8,900 ha of land and killing 6,700 cattle.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- Response is now focused on the floods and the lean season.
- A deterioration of the security situation in the Tillabéri region led to a Security Risk Management (SRM) review, particularly in Niamey and Tillabéri. The security level will be raised from moderate (level 3) to substantial (level 4) for Niamey. NSAG activities continue, with attacks against the local population including kidnapping and harassment and leading to considerable population displacements in the regions of Tillabéri (North West near Burkina and Mali) and Diffa (Lake Chad Basin).
- The FSC, the Government and partners are working together to update analyses of COVID-19 impacts on food and nutrition security in the country.

HPC: HNO process started early September with the multi-sector analysis, and should be finalized by 12 October

Challenges: Funding remains the main challenge.

Nigeria

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

Situation update:

- Nigeria's annual inflation rate surged for an eleventh month straight to 12.8 percent in July 2020, from 12.5 percent the previous month. According to the [WFP August Borno and Yobe Market Monitoring reports](#), overall there has been an overall increase in the average retail price of key staples in Borno and Yobe States. Staple food prices (maize, red beans, sorghum, local and imported rice) increased seasonally in markets, underscored by decreased availability from local production and a reported rise in transportation costs.
- The Save the Children August 2020 price monitoring report indicates that the in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, the cost of the MEB increased by 47 percent from March to August 2020.
- Floods have increased in the three states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe, with Yobe reporting all 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) affected. Partners are currently carrying out a crop monitoring assessment including the impact of floods on expected harvests.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- As a result of increased prices affecting access to food for vulnerable households, FSS partners implementing cash voucher assistance are [increasing monthly food assistance transfer values](#) to ensure households can meet their food needs.
- As part of Risk Mitigation Measures and Contingency Planning, partners anticipated a scenario in which price increases were extreme to the point of being unsustainable through a change in Transfer Value. FSS partners have developed a guidance note on [changes in transfer modalities](#).

HRP and funding:

- Following the release of the final COVID-19 CH updates in early July, FSS partners have reduced the total **COVID-19 only** funding requirement from about USD 104 million to USD 36.7 million.
- The updated USD 36.7 million includes additional numbers for food assistance, wet feeding, livelihoods support and covers operational costs for COVID-19 precautionary measures.
- The significant reduction in the funding requirement is a result of the final increase in the number of people in need as a result of COVID-19 and its related effects, as indicated in the June 2020 CH update (600,000 people), which was significantly lower than the preliminary figures (2.6 million).

Challenges:

- Food prices still relatively high
- Limited access due to insecurity and difficult roads from heavy rains.
- Floods as a result of the rainy season have led to displacements and damaged crops.

SOUTHERN AFRICA UPDATES

Mozambique

COVID-19 cases: 4,832

Situation update:

- The number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, with the majority being local transmissions. Maputo City remains the most affected (1,120 cases), while cases in Maputo Province have decreased (206). Cases have also decreased in Cabo Delgado (198), Nampula (131) and Gaza (116), with an increase in other provinces, mainly Niassa (113) and Zambezia (113).
- On 6 September the national State of Emergency came to an end and was replaced by a State of Public Disaster. Under this category, the resumption of activities that began under the emergency will continue in a phased and cautious manner, guided by specific criteria. The following containment measures in force during the emergency phase will continue: (i) mandatory use of masks; (ii) quarantine, isolation and internment; (iii) maximum of two people visiting inpatients per day; (iv) closure of bars/discos; (v) suspension of collective sports; (vi) shortened periods market operation from 6am to 5pm; (vii) limit of number of passengers for land, air and water transport vessels. In addition, the following activities will resume: (i) passenger flights; (ii) visa waivers on the principle of reciprocity; (iii) education, especially for grade 12 students (final grade for secondary education before university), while other grades will be on a case-by-case basis; (iv) public and private workplaces opening, with additional measures such as temperature checks, disinfection and limited access for people with flu-like symptoms; (v) issuance of documents including passports, national IDs, driver's license, etc.
- The humanitarian situation in Mozambique continues to deteriorate due to multiple crises: consecutive climatic shocks (drought and floods) in central and southern areas, conflict in the north and the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the entire country, disrupting livelihoods and causing food insecurity. Currently, some 3.9 million people are estimated to be acutely food insecure in Mozambique, which is 2.4 million more than pre-COVID (1.5 million).
- According to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS-NET), as of August many central and northern areas continued to face Minimal (IPC Phase 1) or Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) persists in drought-affected areas and in areas affected by conflict in Cabo Delgado. With the start of the lean season in October, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to emerge in southern Tete and northern Manica provinces. In urban and peri-urban areas, many poor households are unable to engage in basic livelihood activities due to ongoing COVID-19 control measures. The most vulnerable poor urban households are likely in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
- In Cabo Delgado, on 4 September administrators of Metuge and Quissanga Districts held a meeting with humanitarian actors to present the Government's new vision for the IDP response in these districts. The Government's response will now be centred on the figure of the Secretary of State and the plan aims to develop new villages to accommodate the growing number of IDPs. The Government's Support and Reconstruction Commission will accompany this process for all districts and foresees more definite resettlements. This new plan is currently being finalized and includes an activity timeline, identification and assessment of possible relocation/resettlement areas, as well as

first site preparation activities; the initial assessed temporary accommodation site in Ngalane has therefore been cancelled.

- In Nampula Province, IDPs are accommodated in public buildings and living in poor conditions. The HCT has requested support from Pemba coordination structures. A mission was already conducted with representation of partners from Cabo Delgado and Nampula Provinces to assess a possible relocation site; the final site assessment report is to be submitted. A Consultation with Communities exercise and a multisector assessment is being planned for Nampula, in coordination and with support from Cabo Delgado clusters/sectors.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- FSC partners are scaling up their response, particularly food assistance in preparation for the upcoming lean season in November. However, imminent food pipeline breaks expected until the end of the year, especially for Cabo Delgado, with resource shortfalls for the next six months of USD 133 million (Aug 2020 - Jan 2021).
- FSC partners reached 458,388 people with food assistance in August 2020 (596,708 targeted), of which 90.5 percent provided by WFP.
- FSC partners plan to assist about 813,983 food-insecure people in September 2020 (95 percent of which planned by WFP).
- For livelihood assistance, FSC partners reached 289,825 people with livelihoods assistance during the winter agricultural season (between May and August 2020). An additional 98,508 people are planned to be assisted by livelihoods partners in September 2020.

HRP and funding:

- Initial discussions on the HNO/HRP process have started, however the HCT has not yet come up with a final position regarding the process. There is likely to be limited data available as most national assessments were halted and are only now starting.
- Within the CERF underfunded window (USD 7 million allocated to Mozambique for the Cabo Delgado response), the FSC received USD 2.2 million (USD 1.5million for food assistance and USD 700,000 for livelihoods).

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

COVID-19 cases: 10,343

Situation update:

- According to the most recent IPC analysis, from July to December 2020, an estimated 21.8 million people (33 percent of the population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in IPC Phase 3 or 4 (Crisis or worse). This figure includes 5.7 million people classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). For the projected period (January to June 2021), 19.6 million people (29 percent of the population analysed) are likely to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse, including more than 4.8 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). The main drivers of food insecurity are conflict, COVID-19, flooding and economic decline. The populations in acute food insecurity are mainly found in the provinces of Ituri (47 percent of the population analysed), Tanganyika (45 percent of the population analysed, 5 territories out of 6), Kasai Central and Kasai (respectively 44 percent and 43 percent of the population analysed). The provinces of North and South Kivu, followed by Ituri and Kasai Central, have the highest number of people in acute food insecurity. The areas classified as Emergency (IPC Phase 4) are Kabongo (Haut-Lomami), Djugu and Mahagi (Ituri); Dimbelenge and Kananga (Kasai Central),

Tshilenge (Kasai Orinetal); Fizi and Kalehe in South Kivu; and finally, Kabalo, Kalemie, Manono, Moba and Nyunzu (Tanganyika).

- Conflict, displacement of populations, and armed groups remain concerns mainly in parts of the east of the country. The COVID-19 pandemic as well as national and international restrictive measures have slowed economic activity and created job losses for a large part of the population. Household purchasing power has also been disrupted by a fluctuating exchange rate from depreciation of the Congolese Franc against the US Dollar. Climatic factors and plant and livestock diseases are also drivers of food insecurity.
- July and August mVAM results for Kasai and Kasai Central show that more than 90 percent of households have poor or borderline food consumption and almost every household used consumption coping strategies in the previous week. Data show extremely high use of emergency livelihoods coping strategies, the main reason being a lack of access to food (66 percent of households). 92 percent of surveyed households confirmed having observed price increases since March 2020, and 71 percent confirmed stock depletions.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- The FSC finalized data collection and analysis for 2020 T2. According to info shared by partners, around 4 million people have been supported through food assistance (2.7 million in-kind and 1.3 million with cash). [See here for more.](#)

HRP and funding:

- According to the FTS, the HRP is currently funded at 22 percent (USD 448 million funded against USD 2 billion required). From an FSC perspective: USD 133 million is funded versus USD 888 million required.
- 2 HF allocations currently ongoing: standard allocation (USD 49 million, of which USD 14 million allocated to the FSC); reserve allocation related to the degradation of the humanitarian situation in Ituri (USD 4 million, of which USD 1.5 million allocated to the FSC).
- 2021 HNO & HRP process has been launched. HCT gave clear guidance on how to compute intersectoral PIN (severity to be taken into account: 5, 4 and 3 if and only if at least 3 out of the 5 impacts have been detected in the same Health Zone).

Zimbabwe

COVID-19 cases: 7,508 (up from 5,643)

Situation update:

- The impact of COVID-19 is expected to be harder on urban populations, as they rely heavily on income from sources such as street vending, trading, casual labour and market gardening, which have been hit by preventative measures and lockdowns. The number of urban food insecure is expected to rise to 3.3 million people for the October to December 2020 period, up from 2.2 million at the same time in 2019. In rural areas, the number of food-insecure people is set to climb to 5.3 million for the October to December 2020 period, up from 3.7 million at the same time in 2019. This is due to stocks dwindling following the recent drought-hit harvest. The absence of vital foreign remittances is being keenly felt, as newly unemployed migrant workers return home to their villages.
- According to the WFP August Food Security Outlook, prices of basic food items have generally plateaued and remained high since the sharp increases seen during the second quarter of 2020. Particularly, prices in local currency payments have been increasing during 2020 by an average of 424 percent, with the lowest price change being recorded for maize grain at 383 percent and the highest

for sugar beans at 463 percent. Further, food inflation was pegged at 977 percent for July from 836 percent in June 2020 and remains the main driver of inflation in the country.

Humanitarian access and Operational coverage:

- For the month of August, FSL Cluster partners reported providing in-kind food assistance, vouchers or cash (USD) to a total of 745,000 beneficiaries in both rural and urban areas. Of these, 150,000 received food baskets either via e-vouchers or remittance companies in urban zones. A further 155,000 beneficiaries were reached with agricultural inputs, extension services or benefitted from community asset rehabilitation.
- As of August, to adapt their activities to COVID-19, 11 FSL Cluster partners added soap to their distributions, reaching 300,000 beneficiaries. 17 partners now display COVID-19 information, education and communication (IEC) material during their FSL interventions, reaching 869,000 beneficiaries. Eight partners have also included health and referral services available to 679,000 beneficiaries at intervention sites.
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is working with the FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa (FAO SFS) and the International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA) to strengthen the capacity of affected countries and regional institutions to respond to the African Migratory Locust (AML) threat. FAO has provided USD 500,000 to support the response. The project will focus on strengthening the capacity of affected countries and regional institutions.
- The national cash working group approved the updated Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) value for urban cash-based transfers, rising from USD 9 to USD 12 per person per month. Given the need for improved hygiene measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, soap was also added to the MEB food basket.

HRP and funding:

- According to FTS, only USD 100 million of the USD 490.5 million (22.6 percent) requested budget for the HRP 2020 was committed as of 14 September 2020. However, 92 percent of the HRP 2020 COVID-19 Addendum budget was contributed, which significantly helps to adapt the FSL activities to the pandemic.
- The HNO and HRP 2021 process has started in Zimbabwe. According to the agreed timeline, the People in Need calculation should be finalized and shared by 2 October. The HRP will be project based.

LATIN AMERICA UPDATES

Haiti

COVID-19 cases: 8,429

Situation update:

- According to the recent IPC analysis, between August 2020 and February 2021, 42 percent of the analysed population (around 4 million people) are facing high acute food insecurity and are in need of urgent action. That includes 905,471 people classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and over 3 million in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). For the projected period of March-June 2021, 46 percent of the analysed population (around 4.4 million people) are expected to face high acute food insecurity. That includes 1.1 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 3.2 million in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Key drivers of food insecurity are: economic decline (inflation, exchange rate deterioration, reduction in remittances), poor harvests (due to below-normal rainfall), the impact of hurricane Laura (Category 4 Atlantic hurricane, the island's strongest on record since 1856) and the COVID-19 pandemic.

- According to the rapid assessment of the *Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security, Livelihoods and Agricultural Production (SAMEPA)* led by Ministry of Agriculture, COVID-19 has negatively affected the income of over 95 percent of Haitian households (reduced the income of more than 85 percent and led 10 percent to unemployment). The incomes of urban households are more negatively affected by COVID-19 than those of rural areas. In urban areas, 15.8 percent of households lost their jobs against 7.8 percent in rural areas. However, rural households are more affected by reduced incomes (87 percent against 83 percent).
- Hurricane Laura passed over Haiti on 23 August, bringing heavy rains, strong winds and flooding across the country, with 28 communes in four departments badly affected by flooding. The West, South and South East departments were the most heavily impacted. The Government of Haiti together with UN partners took part in a fly-over of the West and South East departments on 26 August, which revealed that the storm has had a significant environmental and agricultural impact, particularly in the South East department. Agricultural losses were observed in the South East, West, south Artibonite, Grand Anse, Nippes and North West departments. Losses in numerous communes of the South East are estimated to be extensive, ranging from 50-80 percent for certain crops. The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MRNDR) has undertaken evaluations but results are not yet available.
- High inflation rates continue to be a driver of food insecurity. However, the exchange rate seems to be improving, which could potentially have an impact on household purchasing power.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- In the second quarter, FSS partners have reached more than 600,000 beneficiaries with food distributions, livelihoods support, market gardening and resilience activities, through in kind or cash transfers and vouchers.
- Overall there is a gap of nearly 800,000 people not covered at the national level. For food assistance, the coverage gap is 52 percent (corresponding to 811,000 people), while for agriculture and livelihoods it is 76 percent (corresponding to 1.2 million people). Major gaps are found in the West, North and Port au Prince Metropolitan departments. It should be noted that gaps are based on the HRP objectives of the sector and take into account funding forecasts (target). This explains why departments like Grand Anse and South East have no gaps. If needs are taken into account, gaps would be much higher (only 1.4 million people targeted versus 4 million people in need).
- For more information see the [FSS Haiti webpage](#).
- No changes in terms of humanitarian access or shifts in programming

HRP and funding:

- According to FTS, only USD 31 million of the USD 250 million (12 percent) of the total requested budget for the HRP 2020 has been committed, although these figures seem to be underestimated.
- The HNO and HRP 2021 process has started in Haiti. The HRP will be cost-based.

Colombia

COVID cases: 694,664

Situation update:

- The recent escalation of violent incidents in various areas of the country (including the Catatumbo subregion in Norte de Santander and areas of the Pacific coast, such as Samaniego in Nariño) generate multiple effects on already vulnerable populations, including indigenous and migrant communities, which they are now displaced or confined. These circumstances can exacerbate levels of food insecurity due to loss of livelihoods and the FSC expects the needs to increase for these populations.

- According to the third round of evaluation of COVID-19 related needs for Venezuelan migrants and refugees, food remains the main need perceived by households (91% of households), followed by housing (67%) and access to employment or livelihoods (54%). 69% of those surveyed stated that they had skipped at least one meal a day, with 60% of households eating twice a day and 9% eating only once or less. 92% of households indicate that the availability of financial resources is a barrier to accessing food. 9% of those surveyed have no source of income. 72% of female-headed households consume 2 or fewer meals per day (vs. 63% for male-headed households).
- A recent [ACAPS report](#) states the risk of the COVID-19 crisis leading to increased food insecurity and malnutrition as highly probable and of high impact.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- 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 1.3 million people in a state of vulnerability in 13 departments of the country.
- In response to the recent displacement of mixed populations in the Catatumbo subregion, WFP is preparing to serve part of the affected households with immediate response and later with comprehensive technical assistance for livelihoods recovery.
- In response to the launch of the PRASS (Sustainable Selective Testing, Tracking & Isolation) strategy by the Colombian government, WFP has decided to support this important initiative specifically to help ensure the food security of isolated families. 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.
- During the first semester of 2020, 947,206 Venezuelan refugees and migrants (out of 1,12 million targeted) received food assistance through cash-based transfers, cooked meals, in-kind rations for people on the move or school meals.
- Within the priorities of the COVID-19 response, the FSS adapted food assistance modalities, ad-hoc communication strategies, COVID-19 contingency measures and social protection for small-scale producers.

HRP and funding:

- The HNO and HRP 2021 process has started for both the response to the Venezuelan Crisis and the response to conflict and natural disasters. According to the agreed timeline, the People in Need calculation should be finalized in mid-September, although COVID-19 is making estimates for 2021 much higher than 2020.

Venezuela

COVID cases: 57,823

Situation update:

- FSC partners warned of reduced corn and rice production during the planting cycle. Indeed, 112,000 ha of corn and 37,500 ha of rice were planted this year, a decrease of respectively 40 and 50 percent compared to last year.
- Fuel shortages persist. The private agricultural sector has stated that 120,000 production units and 90,000 producers are strongly affected by this shortage, which translates into a decrease in the food available to Venezuelans.
- According to the results of a survey on the living conditions and health of elderly people in Lara, Miranda and Monagas, 20 percent of those interviewed said they were continuing to work to meet their basic needs. Differences were noted in the regularity of government-issued CLAP food boxes

received: 44 percent receive them bi-monthly, 21 percent quarterly, 28 percent monthly, and 7 percent do not receive them at all. The diet of the people interviewed does not include a lot of protein: 32 percent eat fish, chicken or meat once a month, and 22 percent only do so once every 15 days. 52 percent indicate that they have had to reduce portions for most of their meals.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- In August approximately 30,000 people benefited from food security activities, including distributions of food, cash, seeds, tools, small equipment, animals, and technical assistance for food production.
- Under the Cash working group, a sub-working group has been created to prepare the MEB for cash-based interventions.
- REACH has conducted the first round of the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative. Results will be available in the second half of September.
- Fuel shortage continues to hamper humanitarian access.

HRP and funding:

- According to FTS, in total USD 140 million was received for Venezuela, of which USD 62 million for the HRP (8 percent of the required USD 762 million). The FSS remains among the least funded, with USD 1 million received of USD 148 million requested (0.7 percent).
- OCHA announced the opening of a country-based pooled fund (CBPF) for Venezuela, with USD 4 million already raised (from Canada, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). The first allocation is foreseen for 2021.
- For the HNO and HRP 2021 process, the humanitarian community plans to update the current document. The HRP will remain project-based.

EASTERN AFRICA UPDATES

Ethiopia

Situation update:

- Flooding in low-lying areas of the country and an influx of returnees from neighbouring countries have both persisted, increasing the number of people in need of food and cash assistance. According to OCHA's [humanitarian bulletin](#), close to half a million people are affected by the floods.
- An initial kick-off workshop was held on 26 and 27 August for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Cycle (HPC), which was officially opened by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. The Ethiopia FSC is represented in the inter-sectoral data analysis team, which is led by OCHA.

Humanitarian access and Operational updates:

- Cash and food distributions are in progress for rounds 3 and 4 of the double allocations, while round 5 assistance for the period of September – mid-October was launched on 1 September.
- Food assistance partners are expecting an increase in the number of food-insecure people due to floods in Afar, Amhara, Gambela, Oromia, SNNP and Somali regions of the country.

HRP and funding:

- The 2020 HRP mid-year review was officially launched on 1 September. The FSC target for Ethiopia has increased to 11.8 million food-insecure people who will require food and cash assistance. ([link to HRP](#)) during the second half of the year.
- According to the [FTS](#), there are still some funding gaps for the planned food/cash assistance rounds. The FSC funding requirements had increased to USD 593.4 million by mid-year from USD 399.5 million at the start of the year.

Challenges:

- The number of food-insecure people is projected to increase due to the negative impacts of COVID-19 on food systems, as well as displacements due to floods and conflict.

South Sudan

COVID-19 cases: 2,519

Situation update:

- Compounded shocks have heightened vulnerability, especially in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity and Lakes where COVID-19 disruptions to supply chains, the macro-economic crisis/currency devaluation (at levels last seen in 2016/2017), flooding, violence and displacement are all expected to lead to very serious levels of food insecurity by the time of the delayed IPC analysis.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- WFP reported reaching 40,000 people with increased or expanded social safety net schemes and a further 134,000 beneficiaries with unconditional food assistance, targeting those most affected by COVID-19.
- WFP also reached 535,000 flood-affected people in Jonglei, Lakes, Unity and Upper Nile.
- The livelihood response has been slower to mobilize (lacking the logistic capacity and resources of WFP) but will support: inter-cluster rapid flood response kits; joint FAO/UNICEF/WFP Integrated Rapid Response Mechanisms (IRRM); recovery response with fast-maturing varieties of vegetable seeds; resilience support through flood defence/ dykes/ and infrastructure rehabilitation, etc.

HRP and funding:

- As of 11 September, the HRP 2020 COVID-19 addendum has received a total of USD 17.8 million (10 percent).
- Original HRP only 43 percent funded (USD 276 million).

Challenges:

- Earlier lockdown travel restrictions have been lifted, so staff are returning but there are issues around accessing COVID-19 testing facilities both inside and outside the country (advocating for 96 hours' validity as opposed to the current 72 hours may help).
- South Sudanese Pound now devalued to 400:1 USD compared to 270: 1 USD before COVID-19.

Somalia**Situation update:**

- On May 2020, the food security needs were reviewed based on the IPC protocol. The analysis considered the cumulative and combined effect of various shocks including COVID 19, desert locusts and flooding. The projections indicate that approximately 3.4 million people will be in IPC 3 and 4 for the period July-September 2020. As such, needs considering the triple shocks, and not by each shock

as standalone. Notably, the FSC has set targets and coordinate with partners to respond to the needs overall.

Humanitarian access and Operational update:

- In the month of August, 26 FSC partners assisted 1.6 million people against a target of 3 million. Responses in Banadir, Lower Shabelle and Middle Juba are less than 25 percent of the target. In Banadir the low coverage is due to funding while for Lower and Shabelle and Middle Juba the main reason is access. Nevertheless, operational issues pertaining to partnership and registration of beneficiaries also contributed to low coverage in some regions.
- Livelihood inputs for *Deyr* season run for the period August 2020-January 2021. 26,030 beneficiaries have been assisted so far in the first month, compared to a target of 1 million.

HRP and funding:

- FSC portion funded at 74 percent overall, with the following caveat: the needs/requirements are based on the revised HRP, which de-earmarked that planned for the first half of the year but for which funding had not been secured. Thus, the 74 percent is really against adjusted needs and will not translate into 74 percent for the actual response. This includes funding recently confirmed but which would not have been available for programming at the time. Funding is also not evenly distributed across the two response objectives.

Challenges:

- FSC partners have adjusted programming in order to minimize as far as possible the risk of exposure to COVID-19. This includes the redesign of distribution centres in line with hygiene and social distancing guidelines, provision of multiple rations (starting in April) to reduce travel to distribution points, and the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and hygiene materials to cooperating partner staff.