



FSC Monthly Sitrep

Situation Update

18th November to 18th December 2020

Summary

Asia & Pacific

In Myanmar's **Rakhine state** the situation remained volatile due to continued armed conflict affecting vulnerable communities with limited access to nutritious diets, income, information or other basic services. In **Bangladesh**, approximately 3,000 Rohingya living in the camps were relocated to the Bhasan Char island by the Government of Bangladesh – see [UN statement](#). In Cox's Bazar district, after the opening of the first "Retailer in a Box" temporary e-voucher outlet, 99 percent of Rohingya households have transitioned to food assistance using e-vouchers. In Cox's Bazar district, humanitarian actors are increasingly involved in disability inclusion initiatives.

Latin America

With the end of the cyclone season in Central and South America, the main concerns are for the economic situation in Haiti and Venezuela, volatile exchange rates and the impact on the cost of the food basket.

Near East and Eastern Europe

In **Armenia**, there are 90,000 people defined as 'spontaneous arrivals', but the number of those in need of food assistance is unclear. In **Lebanon**, sector partners continue to support food assistance as part of the COVID-19 and economic crisis response. Imports are decreasing and the cost of the SMEB is higher than October 2019 levels by 183 percent. In Libya, the PiN is around 699,000 – more than double that of 2020 due to COVID 19 restrictions. In **the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT)**, the pandemic has had a major impact on businesses and among various livelihood groups.

Southern Africa

In **Mozambique**, from October to December 2020 about 2.7 million people were estimated to be in acute food insecurity (34 percent more than in the same period last year). This is expected to rise to 2.9 million people at the peak of the lean season (January to March 2021). In the **region**, the cyclone season is upcoming with a risk of tropical storms and cyclones across south/central Mozambique and Eastern Zimbabwe.

Eastern Africa

In Ethiopia, the Government's National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) continues to assist returnees from neighbouring countries. Based on OCHA's humanitarian update on the Tigray region ([LINK](#)), the ongoing conflict is causing shortages of food and water, among other items. The situation may also negatively impact harvesting activities in *Meher*-dependent areas, as well as planting in *Belg*-receiving areas. Moreover, rising numbers of people are being displaced to bordering regions of Amhara and Afar. Higher food prices have also made food access difficult, while desert locust remains a threat to agriculture.

West and Central Africa

Presidential elections were held in Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic (CAR), with some security incidents but no major troubles. Cadre Harmonisé (CH) assessments have been finalized in some countries (Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali and Cameroon). Vulnerability levels have decreased for two major reasons: positive agricultural and pastoral seasons and lower than expected impacts of COVID-19 on food systems. Security remains one of the main drivers of food insecurity, as it impacts livelihoods by limiting population movements. HRP's are still being finalized in most countries.

ASIA AND PACIFIC UPDATES

Afghanistan

Situation update:

- Afghanistan has been confirmed as in a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, with suspected and confirmed cases again rising while income-earning opportunities diminish.
- People are facing a grim winter ahead as they struggle to keep warm amid soaring poverty driven by the economic shock of COVID-19. Given this situation, there is an urgent need for additional funding for winterisation support
- Intense fighting between Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and a non-state armed groups (NSAG) caused more displacement and impacted humanitarian activities in the south of the country.

Operational update:

- Support is ongoing for COVID-19 affected people, mainly in peri-urban and urban areas. By the first week of December 2020, WFP assisted a total of 1.27 million beneficiaries under its COVID-19 response. This is in addition to emergency assistance provided to displaced people, regular assistance to returnees and seasonal support to people in IPC levels 3 and 4.
- Access to some areas was reduced due to insecurity, resulting in some delayed food deliveries and distributions in affected areas.
- Partners making every effort to gain access in hard-to-reach areas, especially in the south of the country.

HNO/HRP:

HNO completed - HRP ongoing

Cox's Bazar

Situation update:

- Approximately 3,000 Rohingya living in the camps were relocated to the Bhasan Char island by the Government of Bangladesh – see [UN statement](#).
- Humanitarian actors are increasingly involved in disability inclusion initiatives. An Age and Disability Working Group has been formed at Cox's Bazar level and the FSS will discuss with the ISCG how to integrate disability disaggregated data into our 5Ws.
- Discussions have resumed on solid waste management and skills development at inter-sectoral level. The FSS has been involved in both initiatives to strengthen or integrate these aspects into our programming, for sustainability and to ensure quality of trainings respectively.
- WFP-FAO Cox's Bazar offices have developed a roadmap for collaboration and joint programming. The FSL is acting as Secretariat for this, with a [matrix](#) of focal points, objectives and the workplan. \

Operational update:

- The FSS developed [SOPs](#) to ensure operational coordination of interventions in the host community by cross-checking partners' beneficiary lists, using target beneficiaries' national ID numbers as unique identifiers (see [concept note](#)). Based on 2021 planning information received so far, the FSS is expanding this exercise from only unconditional cash assistance to all activities, in order to monitor which beneficiaries are receiving what assistance and inform partners to ensure complementarity.
- General food assistance: after the opening of the first "Retailer in a Box" temporary e-voucher outlet, 99 percent of Rohingya households have transitioned to food assistance using the e-voucher modality. From December, beneficiaries receive a number of fixed items (implemented due to COVID-19) as well as the choice of purchasing flexible items as opposed to pre-packaged fixed items.
- Partners' emergency support (unconditional food and cash) in northern sub-districts of Cox's Bazar has returned to pre-COVID-19 levels. Some partners are still providing multi-purpose cash grants to beneficiaries as COVID-19 response in Ukhiya and Teknaf. Some of these partners are new and only began distributing in November.

HNO/HRP:

FSS HNO/HRP completed; draft sent to the ISCG for compilation.

Myanmar

Situation update:

- **COVID-19:** The Ministry of Health and Support reported 103,166 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Myanmar as of 9 December 2020, 2,174 fatalities and 81,715 recovered.
- **Rakhine:** The situation in northern Rakhine State remained volatile due to continued armed conflict between the Myanmar Army (MA) and the Arakan Army (AA), along with the pandemic, with restrictions affecting communities who with scarce access to nutritious diets, income, information or other basic services. The entire district has been continually receiving life-saving assistance. Areas with the lowest level of food insecurity are those where communities' resilience has been reinforced with livelihood support.

- **Shan:** More than 290 people from four villages in the areas surrounding armed conflict have been displaced. As of 11 December, IDPs remain displaced and have been receiving assistance from local civil society organizations, government departments and humanitarian agencies.
- **Kachin:** Some food gaps in Hpakant and Mohnyin townships due to COVID-19 restrictions. An invasion of rats in Bum Len village in Njang Yang township has also affected the food security of these communities.

Operational update:

- In **Rakhine**, access to humanitarian assistance remained limited to life-saving support; COVID-19 projects have been granted based on security levels by the Rakhine State Government (RSG). Other activities which had started or were planned to start have been on hold since August 2020. Only a few agencies have access and a limited number of staff able to visit the villages.
- Some areas in Maungdaw and Buthidaung township allowed for life-saving support and COVID related activities. Reaching the most vulnerable families with timely and effective humanitarian assistance has been a challenge for the partners operating in nRS. Several activities have changed such as changed from individual food distribution to cluster-based distribution through food management committee.
- **Shan:** COVID-19 travel restrictions limited field trips for implementing and/or monitoring humanitarian activities. In NSS, COVID related travel advises from Government are unstable and varies from township to township depending on COVID circumstances and decision of respective township level COVID Control Committee. As of early Dec 2020, there are still existing of COVID checkpoints in projected townships and 2 weeks of home quarantine is required for overnight trips while day return trip allowed with no quarantine require. Access to IDP camps and project villages for food/cash distribution is still feasible in NSS. As gathering of people not yet permitted due to COVID circumstances, suspension of livelihoods training is still reported by many humanitarian actors willing to implement such activities in NSS. On other hand, many livelihood actors are transitioning providing training via online platform rather than in-person.
- **Kachin** Access still difficult in non-governmental controlled areas due to the China border closure.

HNO/HRP:

HNO/HRP almost completed; all documents finalised except for financial requirements.

Pacific

Situation update:

- Tropical Cyclone Yasa severely affected Fiji, with rain and very high wind speeds of over 250km/h. Yasa also brought heavy rains to Samoa and Tonga. Fiji is the main focus for response and updated information has been provided to Tonga and Samoa.
- The response to Yasa by the Fiji FSLC and rPFSC has been well coordinated. Rapid initial damage assessments by the FSLC are complete and the process to begin a multi-sector, harmonized and in-depth damage assessment is currently underway.
- Approximately 60,000 rural farming households have been affected.

Operational update:

- Ration packs and seeds are on the way to the most affected areas. Seed packets for 10,000 households in the highest wind speed zone and planning for three months of ration packs is underway for the households in zones 1 and 2 of the cyclone track (most affected areas)
- rPFSC has been working well with the FSLC and partners to communicate situation updates and needs to OCHA and regional partners – three situation reports have been issued, with the next two due in the next week.
- rPFSC has compiled a list of vulnerability assessments that were conducted in 2020. These were largely related to COVID-19 effects in the region. A showcase of five were presented over two rPFSC meetings.

HNO/HRP: NTR

NEAR EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE UPDATES

Armenia

Situation update:

- The Coordination Steering Group estimates there are 90,000 people defined as ‘spontaneous arrivals’ to the Republic of Armenia following the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh.
- Of those, there are conflicting numbers on the number in need of food assistance, with the percentage ranging from 19-61. WFP is currently conducting an assessment to clarify this.

Operational update:

- An inter-agency response plan is currently being developed. The Food Security and Nutrition Working Group finalized its response strategy and top priorities. In the next two weeks members will submit plans on how needs will be met.
- A standard food assistance basket has been generated to support unified food assistance across the response. A minimum expenditure basket of USD 25 per person for 30 days was set for cash modalities.
- Agricultural and livestock support will be prioritized to protect these food security assets.

HNO/HRP: N/A

Lebanon

- 2,056 new cases registered on 17 December and 150,993 overall cases in Lebanon.
- **Supply:** 18 percent decrease in food imports from January –November 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. Between January 2020 and August 2020, total imports decreased by 41 percent compared to the same period in 2019, although 82 percent of WFP-contracted shops reported to have more than two weeks of stocks, compared to 72 percent in July. Only 2 percent of shops that received subsidized items reported receiving the full ordered quantities.
- **Demand:** black market rates have been heavily affected and increasing due to political developments. The food SMEB recorded a slight decrease in November 2020, at LBP 108,869 – more than 180 percent higher than October 2019. Month-on-month variations in the food SMEB between October and November were minimal (down 0.4 percent)

- **Key market risks:** lifting or modifying food and non-food subsidies (fuel, medicine, etc.), would lead to significant price spikes and hamper purchasing power, especially for the most vulnerable. Any escalation in the LBP liquidity crisis could further deteriorate the situation and lead to market shortages. People may not be able to access food if controls on cash withdrawals escalate.

Operational update:

- Sector partners continue to support food assistance for people with COVID-19, those in isolation facilities and quarantine cases, through FSS coordinators and in consultation with local rapid response teams. From April to November 2020, sector partners distributed **155,550** food parcels under this response country wide, of which 59 percent went to Lebanese people, 34 percent to Syrians and 7 percent to Palestinians. Tripoli, Zahle and Akkar have a higher concentration of assistance.
- In November WFP reached 15,500 households (57,350 people) with family food parcels as part of its COVID-19 and economic crisis response.

Response Plan: Beirut blast flash appeal: Revision completed in November.

Additional comments:

- The FSS is preparing an advocacy note on the removal of subsidies and the impact on food security; first draft should be ready mid-January 2021.
- FSS has started a series of joint meetings with the Livelihoods sector on support for agriculture cooperatives. The last meeting was on access to markets, with a SWOT analysis prepared based on discussions with partners. The next meeting will be in February 2021 on ‘Cooperatives’ Technical Capacities For Transformation and/or Processing’.

Libya

Situation update:

- In November and early December, heavy rainfall caused flooding in several parts of Al Jabal Al Akhdar mountains in the country’s eastern region. The FSS provided food to affected households through the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM).
- The FSS estimates some 699,000 people to be in need of food and livelihoods assistance in 2021 – more than double the number in 2020. This is mainly due to Libya being heavily reliant on imports for food and other goods, as well as diminished exports from other countries and movement restrictions due to COVID-19 that have negatively affected all components of food security. Higher prices, compounded by the impact of curfews and lockdown measures on people’s access to work, particularly those in the informal sector or engaged in day labour, have led to increased food insecurity.

Operational update:

- Unconditional food assistance: programmes continue across the country, with general food distributions, ready-to-eat meals for vulnerable refugees and migrants, and emergency food assistance through the RRM.
- Livelihoods: A hydroponics pilot project in Sebha is being finalized, targeting IDPs, migrants and host communities who rear a small number of livestock.

HNO/HRP: FSS envelope reduced by 35 percent, which led to a reduced target.

Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT)

Situation update:

- The Government of Palestine imposed a full lockdown for four governorates in the West Bank (Tulkarm , Hebron, Nablus and Bethlehem) for 10 days, starting from 11 of December with the possibility of delivering agricultural and food products to the West Bank. As a direct impact of COVID-19 control measures in the Gaza Strip, poultry prices decreased but other meat and vegetable prices showed no significant change. A follow-up assessment will be conducted in the coming period.
- Gaps in production capacities reported among various livelihood groups: herders, farmers, Bedouins, female-led cooperatives and fisherfolk (FAO Rapid Appraisal, November 2020).
- A recent survey on the impact of COVID-19 on economic/business establishments from March to May 2020 confirmed that:
 - 63 percent reported difficulties in the supply of inputs and raw materials;
 - sales/production were 50 percent below average;
 - 89 percent are facing a decline in cash flow;
 - 37 percent had to delay payments to suppliers and employees, while 36 percent took loans from friends and family to cover cash shortages;
 - 14 percent of establishments had to let go of employees, while 9 percent reduced salaries and wages, 11 percent gave employees unpaid leave and 9 percent gave employees paid leave.

Operational update:

- An emergency loan portfolio amounting to USD 1.5 million was provided with near-zero interest, to support economic/business establishments through financial grants of USD 150,000 for the most affected areas/sectors (Ministry of Labour).
- With additional donor funding and internal loans, regular food assistance to 274,000 recipients of cash-based transfers (CBT) will continue until the end of February. As of 1 January, due to unavailable resources WFP will stop CBT assistance, which has been provided to 65,000 people affected by COVID-19 since May. WFP was able to respond to new food needs largely due to COVID-19 through two internal loans, in May and October, with a total of USD 10.3 million that must be repaid.
- For its fourth round of food assistance, UNRWA announced that they will open nine more as food distribution centres (in addition to the existing 14 centres) in order to accelerate operations, avoid overcrowding and gatherings and ensure social and physical distancing. In this round, UNRWA will provide complete food coupons and add the missing food items from the last period (third round).

HNO/HRP: HNO and HRP completed

Burkina Faso

Situation update:

- Presidential elections were held without major incident on 22 November. Roach confirmed as President of Burkina Faso.
- CH exercise has been held. Vulnerability in Burkina Faso decreased notably due to positive agricultural and pastoral campaigns, with 5 million tonnes of cereal expected to be harvested. 2 million people are food insecure and eight provinces are currently in Phase 3 (Crisis), with projections of 2.7 million in Phase 3 and 2 million in Phase 4 (Emergency).
- The COVID-19 pandemic spiked suddenly with the cold season, and the situation is increasingly alarming. So far 4,835 people have tested positive, up by 1,300 from the last update, with 75 deaths (69 in the last update). Hospitals are running out of tests.

Operational update:

- Access and security situation stable. WFP is leading a special operation to assist the Oudalan (Sahel), but there has been a lack of access until now. Distributions ended 18 December and special operations will continue on a monthly basis.
- FSC partners and observers assisted a total of 686,000 people in October. 638,000 IDPs were assisted out of 1 million officially registered – a coverage rate of 61 percent, of which 68 percent in kind and 31 percent in cash and vouchers. For livelihoods protection, members have assisted 7,000 out of 1 million targeted – a coverage rate of just 1 percent, of which 23 percent in kind and 77 percent in cash and vouchers. This assistance has decreased by 90 percent compared to the previous month.
- CBT continues to be scaled up.
- Shifting in the programme is expected due to COVID-19. One partner discontinued operations, while WFP has activated a business continuity plan for the Boucle du Mouhoun region.

HNO/HRP: HNO is completed; HRP in process with some projects still being finalized.

Cameroon

Situation update:

- Operations are becoming increasingly relevant, with continued and increasing population displacements to neighbouring regions such as the West, Littoral and Center in search of peace and a means of earning a living. Although the latest CH of October 2020 showed a slightly lower need for food security support, this was mainly due to the perceived easing of COVID-19 impacts, which were given a lot of weight in the CH from March 2020. The FSC through 23 partners is currently reaching about 65 percent of its target in 12 out of 13 divisions in both North West and South West regions.
- The affected population are IDPs and host communities, with IDPs slowly increasing as insecurity spreads across the area. With fast deteriorating livelihoods as farmers are unable to access their land for fear of being kidnapped or killed and infrastructure destroyed, beneficiaries are increasingly dependent on humanitarian assistance. Unfortunately, very low levels of funding has left willing partners incapable of providing impactful assistance.
- Partners are starting to relax their initial COVID-19 restrictions, however the basic precautionary measures are still in place at offices and distribution sites to curb any further spread. An estimated 960,000 people have been identified as in need of food security assistance (CH Oct 2020), and about 400,000 will be targeted for assistance in 2021.

Operational update:

- Due to the ongoing crisis, access remains a challenge and has resulted in delivery delays, cancellations and sometimes double rations being distributed to avoid the risk of encountering security constraints in subsequent distribution cycles.
- Due to the severity of insecurity, one of the 13 divisions is still difficult to access and the affected population in this area has yet to receive any support. Other divisions however continue to receive humanitarian assistance on a monthly basis, except during security constraints.
- Programming in the regions remains the same with an increased interest around the use of cash as a modality. Some 26,000 beneficiaries have now migrated from the usual in-kind food assistance to “cash for food”.

HNO/HRP: HNO completed, HRP pending: targets being revised to accommodate partners’ plans and targets.

SOUTHERN AFRICA UPDATES

Mozambique**Situation update:**

- According to the results of the SETSAN analysis, from October to December 2020 about 2.7 million people are in acute food insecurity and are in need of humanitarian assistance, against the 2 million people in the same situation last year – an increase of 34 percent. In the first projection period of January to March 2021 (peak of the lean season), it is estimated that the number of people in acute food insecurity will increase to 2.9 million.
- The cyclone season is upcoming, with a low pressure system forming in the Mozambique Channel, while the humanitarian system is already stretched.

Operational update:

- In Cabo Delgado, there is a possibility of food assistance pipeline break from March if more funds are not raised timely, with needs that goes above 10 million USD per month.
- In the month of November 2020, FSC partners reached 652,872 people with food assistance (96% assisted by WFP). 49% of assistance provided in November was for the populations affected by the conflicts in Cabo Delgado and Nampula and 51% of assistance provided was for the lean season response in the central and southern regions of the country. A total of 26 implementing partners including WFP participated in food distributions, the partners distributed food items via coupon, vouchers and cash and in kind
- Livelihoods: in November 2020, as part of the main planting season, FSC partners reached 47,998 beneficiaries with seeds distributions, livestock protection programmes, tools, training and capacity building. Ten partners participated in this assistance and reached four provinces: Cabo Delgado (four districts, 10,945 people reached), Sofala (two districts, 31,943 people reached), Manica (two districts, 5,095 people reached) and Maputo (one district, 15 people reached).

HNO/HRP: An abridged version of the HRP was published on the 18th of December.

Zimbabwe

Situation update:

- Overall, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases increased by 17 percent to 11,749 cases and 313 deaths by 16 December 2020, from 10,034 cases and 227 deaths on 30 November 2020. There have been concerns by the government of rising complacency and that people are no longer respecting social distancing guidelines or wearing face masks.
- In October, the country recorded the lowest rate of inflation since February 2020, at 471.3 percent. However, on a monthly basis consumers paid more for goods and services in November compared to August 2020, with the month-on-month inflation pegged at 4.37 percent (up from 3.83 percent recorded in August 2020). This increase in the cost of living was however largely driven by inflation for non-food commodities and services.
- The average USD prices for maize grain, maize meal and cooking oil have been relatively stable, with little to no variations between urban and rural markets. The average price of maize grain remained stable in November at USD 0.30/kg, which is comparable to the two-year average and the price reported in October. Maize meal prices decreased slightly from USD 0.50/kg in October to USD 0.47/kg in November, which is 29 percent lower than the two-year average price of USD 0.66/kg. The average sugar bean price in urban markets was relatively stable at USD 2.05/kg compared to USD 2.28/kg reported in rural areas. The price for the commodity in rural areas fluctuated week on week; this is likely a factor of supply in rural markets, which is not as consistent given most traders depend on farmers for supplies throughout the year.
- Most parts of the country started receiving some rainfall as of the first week of October, and the cropping season started in November with more significant rainfall recorded. Farmers have started land preparation activities, which has resulted in an increase in casual labour opportunities for vulnerable households.
- According to IPC results, currently 2.61 million people (27 percent of the analysed population) in rural Zimbabwe are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), while nearly 2.9 million people (29 percent) are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2). Food insecurity levels are primarily due to shocks and hazards experienced in the country such as drought, reduced livelihood opportunities due to restrictions linked to COVID-19, plant pests and diseases, and high food prices. Without the large-scale humanitarian food assistance programmes currently ongoing in the country, more households would likely be in a worse-off food security situation. The Government and development partners are reaching large numbers of households (4.1 million beneficiaries in the current period and 6.7 million beneficiaries in the projected period).

Operational update:

- For the month of November, partners reported providing in-kind food assistance, vouchers, or cash (USD) to a total of 871,000 beneficiaries in both rural and urban areas, with a further 193,000 beneficiaries receiving agricultural and livelihoods support.
- According to FTS, as of 17 November 2020 only USD 141.7 million (does not include USD 65.7 million carry-over by WFP) of the USD 497.7 million total requested budget for the revised 2020 HRP had been funded. The funding level for FSLC projects in 2020 stands at 28 percent.

HNO/HRP:

- By mid-December, the HNO and HRP 2021 narrative cluster inputs were delivered to OCHA. A round of consultations is taking place and a revised version is expected to be sent back to the HCT before the end of the year, although no scheduled has been set yet.
- The launch of the Zimbabwe HRP 2021 is projected for the end of January or beginning of February 2021, although no schedule has been set yet.

LATIN AMERICA UPDATES

Haiti

Situation update:

- COVID-19 cases have increased over the past month, with 9,558 positive cases (+380 people, up 4 percent), during the last month and specifically the last week (up 2 percent). The number of deaths has remained low and stable, with 234 deaths to date (up by two people the last month).
- The economic situation remains worrying, with an exchange rate, still low in USD against the national currency (Gourde, HTG), even if the dollar has recovered slightly from 65 to 70 HTG/ USD, and 85 HTG on the black market. Not all importers have yet transferred this drop in dollars to food products sold in local currency. While the food basket at 2,100 kcal/ person/ month was at USD 24 in August and USD 36 in September, it fell back to USD 28 in October.

Operational update:

- With some new funding confirmed for activities in 2020, in the updated 4W matrix the gap of targeted people by partners is slightly reduced but remains very significant.
- For sector objective 1 (food assistance) the gap is 46 percent, or 724,000 people out of 1.56 million, and the gap for sector objective 2 (agriculture and livelihoods) is 61 percent, or 950 million out of 1.56 million people

HNO/HRP: NTR. Expected to be published in the second half of January.

EASTERN AFRICA UPDATES

Ethiopia

Situation update:

- The Government of Ethiopia through its National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) continues to provide assistance to returnees from neighbouring countries. Among the increasing number of returnees, the most vulnerable remain women and unaccompanied children.
- Based on OCHA's humanitarian update on the Tigray region ([LINK](#)), the ongoing conflict is causing shortages of food and water, among other items. More and more people are being displaced to the bordering regions of Amhara and Afar, while the rest are fleeing to neighbouring Sudan. Sharp increases in food prices have also made food access difficult. These and other direct and indirect consequences of the conflict are expected to worsen food security in the region.

- Desert locust remains a threat to agriculture in Ethiopia. Breeding is currently concentrated in the eastern part of the country and in the Rift Valley near Kenya. Swarms are also present in Afar. FAO plans to scale up control operations with additional aircrafts.
- An assessment is planned by the Ministry of Agriculture to determine the impact of desert locust on crop production and productivity. The assessment will focus on *Meher* production areas adversely affected by swarms.
- Armed conflict and intercommunal clashes are still reported in some agro-pastoral regions of the country, especially the Tigray region. According to a recent rapid assessment conducted in these locations, the conflict has to some extent affected the livelihoods of pastoral households through livestock disease outbreaks, shortages of livestock feed and livestock market interruptions. The continued situation may also negatively impact crop harvest activities in *Meher*-dependent areas as well as planting in *Belg*-receiving areas.

Operational update:

- Following the spread of COVID-19, partners are supporting beneficiaries with double rations of food and cash items to cover their food needs from mid-October 2020 to mid-January 2021. This is the last round of assistance planned for 2020 HRP implementation.
- On top of the 2020 HRP beneficiaries, partners are also assisting flood-affected beneficiaries in some regions of the country (Afar, Oromia, Gambella, Harari, Sidama and SNNP).
- Anticipatory action for the below-average *Gu* rains has been partially launched. Conditions to trigger this were fully met in Afar, SNNP and Somali regions but only partially met in all other regions of Ethiopia. Indicative agricultural activities have been partially funded (using CERF resources) and are planned for March through June 2021. These activities include promotion of short-cycle crop/forage varieties, animal health interventions and provision of feed into the lean season (upon exhaustion of pasture stocks).

HNO/HRP: PIN completed for the HNO; HRP process ongoing (in due course as per deadline) and financial requirement finalized.

Somalia

Situation update:

- Based on the post-2020 *Gu* assessment results, 2.1 million people across Somalia are expected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or higher) food insecurity between October and December without sustained humanitarian assistance. An additional 3 million people are expected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), bringing the total number of people facing acute food insecurity to 5.1 million.
- However, anticipated La Niña conditions are associated with an elevated likelihood of consecutive below-average rainfall seasons, and Somalia faces a high risk that drought conditions will develop by early 2021. Desert locust could also exacerbate crop and pasture losses. In Somalia, when two consecutive rainy seasons perform poorly or fail, past trends show that rapid and large-scale acute food insecurity can occur (as in 2010/2011 and more recently 2016/2017). As a result, a high proportion of the population that is projected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in October-December 2020 could fall into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in early 2021. As such, for the HNO planning, the FSC is using an average projection of 3.5 million Somalis to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) through 2021.

Operational update:

- For the month of November, a total of 16 partners reported various food security responses.

Under objective 1, Improving Access to food through conditional and unconditional transfers (cash, vouchers and in-kind) FSC partners assisted 1,74 million people out of the 2,1 million targeted (83 percent achievement). No response was reported in Middle Juba due to access constraints. In Middle Shabelle, of a targeted 44,000 people only 3 percent were reached due to access constraints. In Banadir, as a targeted 371,900 people only 22 percent were reached, mainly due to funding shortfalls. Under Objective 2, Provision of seasonal livelihood inputs & livestock asset protection), as of August a total of 255,702 beneficiaries have been assisted against a target of 821,315. The cumulative number of people reached accounts for 31 percent of the seasonal target (821,315). Responses provided include farm inputs, tractor hours, animal restocking, livestock treatment and distribution of fishing equipment to fisherfolk.

HNO/HRP: work in progress for the narrative

South Sudan

Situation update:

- Compounded shocks resulted in expected worse food security outcomes from the IPC. There are six contested counties in Warrap (3), Jonglei (2) and NBEG (1) states, which will be sent to FRC/ GSU for review. The worst situation in the most affected state (Jonglei) is Pibor County, as in the November brief.
- GSU/FRC findings for the six counties rejected by the South Sudan IPC TWG. IPC release expected on 18 December and all Phase 5 households in current and projections expected to disappear due to claims the country is in fact peaceful, in direct contradiction to source material and assessments.
- Based on IPC data, the projected 2021 HNO/HRP PiN for the FSL cluster will be 7.4 million (excluding refugees), which is 15 percent higher than the 2020 HRP PiN. Once again we are in unprecedented territory: this figure is not contested and neither are the large number of Phase 4 classified counties.

Operational update:

- Flood response: food assistance to 1.5 million people, livelihoods support to 293,577 households, with FAO pipeline to 62,865 households (with RRF & SSHF funding) planned.
- OCHA requested a scaled-up inter-cluster response plan, with the locations of IPC Phase 5 households, cluster partner presence, planned clusters, funded and likely response from December 2020 to March 2021, and gaps and limitations. The FSL will have a plan ready but challenges with resources and funding mean this gap will likely widen in 2021 given that needs will further increase without a commensurate increase in funding.
- October 5W products/gap analysis: partners reported assisting some 1.6 million beneficiaries with emergency food assistance. 63 percent of beneficiaries received in-kind food assistance, while 37 percent received cash and voucher support. The FSL cluster reached 73,031 households with livelihoods kits (fishing, vegetables and crops) to improve food production in October, with a further 26,671 households receiving different types of training to build their capacity and reduce dependency on food and agricultural assistance.
- For the period of January to October 2020, FSL cluster partners reached 4.6 million beneficiaries with food assistance (CO1) while 623,075 households were reached with livelihoods support (CO2). Partners using cash/vouchers reached a total of 1.3 million beneficiaries. Notably, 97 percent of the CBT modality covered food assistance activities and 3 percent covered livelihoods support (seed fairs and cash for kits). An estimated 1.6 million livestock have been vaccinated/treated by FSL partners. This response was carried out by a total of 156 (2 UN, 42 INGO, 112 NNGO) FSL cluster partners.

HNO/HRP: Ongoing, pending official IPC results; a final/new timeline is expected next week.