



Press Release on 22nd February 2019
Food Security Situation in the Republic of South Sudan

The National Bureau of Statistics on behalf of the government of the Republic of South Sudan, the IPC South Sudan Technical Working Group and all Food Security Stakeholders, announces the results of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis conducted in January 2019.

The newly adopted IPC version 3.0 continues to increase the rigor and utility of the IPC, while still maintaining its evidence-based approach that adheres to internationally accepted protocols for classifying the nature and magnitude of food insecurity and acute malnutrition.

The just concluded IPC analysis shows that the food security situation continues to deteriorate due to conflict-driven displacement, low crop production, the macro-economic crisis, climatic shocks and humanitarian access challenges.

In January 2019, an estimated 6.17 million people, or 54% of the population, were facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity or worse, out of which 1.36 million were in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 30,000 were in Catastrophe (IPC phase 5). The people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in January 2019 were in the former counties of Canal/Pigi, Pibor, Panyikang and Cueibet. Compared with the same period last year, the January 2019 levels of food insecurity reflect a 13% increase in the population facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity or worse in the post-harvest season.

In the projection period of February to April 2019, and in the presence of humanitarian food assistance, an estimated 6.45 million people, or 57% of the population, will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity or worse, with 1.58 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 45,000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

Furthermore, in the projection period of May to July 2019, and in the presence of humanitarian food assistance, an estimated 6.87 million people, or 60% of the population, will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity or worse with 1.91 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 50,000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

From the 2018 cropping season, the country's cereal harvests are estimated to only cover 52% of the national cereal needs with the 48% deficit expected to be covered through cereal imports and humanitarian assistance. This is a clear indicator that the disruption to agriculture in the country is contributing greatly to food insecurity.

Additionally, conflict has disrupted livelihoods and negatively impacted on households' access to other food sources such as fish, livestock products and wild foods.

Food scarcity at household level has led to severe asset depletion as people try to raise income to purchase food. Even as they do this, the on-going economic crisis has significantly reduced their purchasing power, particularly the most vulnerable populations who rely on purchasing highly priced foods from markets.

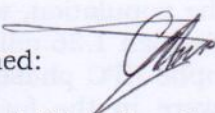
Other significant drivers of food insecurity in South Sudan include climatic shocks – such as flooding and prolonged dry spells at critical stages of crop growth – as well as crop pests and diseases.

In order to prevent some of the populations falling into Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), and to save their lives, urgent, sufficient and sustained multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance and unhindered humanitarian access is required. Close monitoring of the worst-affected areas is also required to ensure that the food security situation does not deteriorate to the extent of endangering people's lives.

With the signing and ongoing implementation of the revitalized peace agreement, together with other initiatives that encourage National dialogue and healing, we look forward to a peaceful environment that will support recovery of disrupted livelihoods and greater participation of the population in the upcoming 2019 agricultural season. These will prevent further deterioration of an already severe food insecurity situation in the country.

The IPC Technical Working Group, the National Bureau of Statistic (NBS), together with all other relevant Ministries, urges all stakeholders to scale up their efforts in the coming months in order to prevent further deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation in the Country.

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