In 2018 the food security situation is again likely to deteriorate for the fifth consecutive year with 5.4 million people severely food insecure (IPC 3, 4 & 5) in the January – March 2018 projection period. This is the highest number of severely food insecure people at this time of year, since the start of the crisis, and this is expected to increase during the lean season and may even surpass the 6 million in the July/August 2017 period.

In 2017, famine was declared in two counties: Leer and Mayendit and at the peak of the lean season 6 million people were classified as severely food insecure. With no end in sight to the multi-context crisis: violence & conflict, food insecurity, economic crisis, disease outbreaks and the collapse of healthcare and social services, the 2018 lean season is projected to begin early and become worse than in 2017.

The conflict has disrupted natural resource based livelihoods and the cereal deficit of 500,000 MT for 2017 is expected to be even worse in 2018, especially with the warring factions having moved into the Greater Equatoria region – the country’s breadbasket. The economic crisis is further exacerbating the dire situation and having a major impact on food security indicators for the market-dependant populations in both rural and urban areas.