



WFP South Sudan Food and Nutrition Security Update

Special Report — 1 December 2016

Highlights

- **3.6 million** people estimated to be severely food insecure, denoting the highest historic levels of food insecurity during the harvest season.
- South Sudan food security and nutrition situation likely to further worsen in the January to April period; **4.6 million** people projected to be severely food insecure between January to April 2017.
- Ravaging **economic crisis and widespread insecurity** impeding improvements in food and nutrition security situation.

Overview

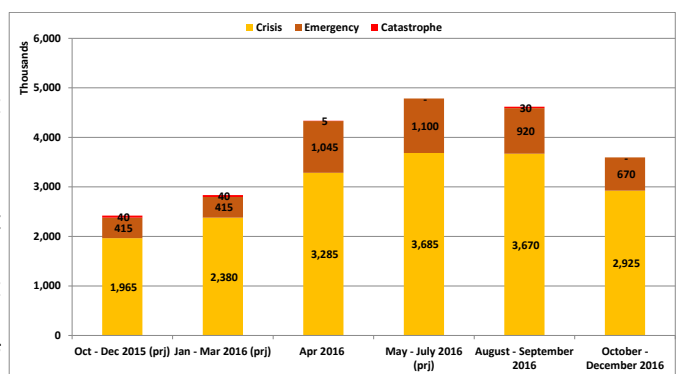
Following the outbreak of conflict in Juba in July 2016, heightened tensions and fighting have spread to several other parts of the country, including the once peaceful and stable Greater Equatoria region, which serves as the main bread basket of the country. Conflict in South Sudan has pushed over a million people into neighbouring countries as refugees while a further 1.87 million people are internally displaced—of which about 200,000 people are living in UN protection of civilian (POC) sites. The economic decline has resulted in the highest inflation rate in the world at 836 percent in October 2016. Further, the depreciation of the South Sudanese Pound (SSP), falling from SSP16/US\$ in August 2015 to SSP74/US\$ in November 2016, and shortage of foreign currency have negatively affected the humanitarian situation. Conflict and insecurity spreading across the country have cut off trade routes and continue to impede commercial imports. Economic activities have been affected as households' access to farm land has been restricted due to insecurity, worsening the food security situation across the country.

Current Food Security & Nutrition Situation

The food security and nutrition situation in South Sudan has deteriorated progressively since the conflict started in 2013. The July 2016 conflict, subsequent heightened tensions and renewed clashes across the country have further aggravated already overwhelming needs. Recent analysis indicates that an **estimated 3.6 million people to be severely food insecure¹** between October and December 2016, the highest levels experienced in South Sudan at harvest time. Among these, an estimated 600,000 people are in the main urban centres across the country. In both rural and urban areas, the food insecure population has at least doubled compared to the same time last year. The severity of food insecurity is highest in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, with 59 percent of the total population facing severe food insecurity, followed by Unity state with 56 percent, Western Bahr el Ghazal with 47 percent, and Central Equatoria with 33 percent.

The scale of **food insecurity remains unprecedented in South Sudan, despite seasonal improvements that are typical of the harvest season.** In the Greater Equatoria region, which is normally the primary food basket for the country, food security is expected to worsen unusually due to conflict and insecurity since July that has prevented the population from accessing their farms.

The collapse of the macro-economy and subsequent hyperinflation and shortage of US dollars has eroded people's purchasing power, especially the most vulnerable. The sharp depreciation of the local currency against the US Dollar has continuously impeded flow of commercial food imports and resulted in substantial increases in prices of imported food and non-food items.



Food insecure population under crisis, emergency and humanitarian catastrophe: trends since 2015

¹ 2.9 million in crisis and 0.7 million in emergency phases of IPC

Crop harvests in most parts of the country are moderating market prices of key staples (prices decreased in September by 10 to 50 percent). However, cereal prices are still substantially higher than the same period last year and the five-year average. In Juba's Konyokonyo market, sorghum and maize prices are over 500 percent higher compared to September 2015, and over 1,100 percent higher compared to the five year period. A combination of average to below average crop production and the continuing economic crisis in the country characterized by depreciation in the currency, inflation, increasing costs of transportation and reduced imports, among other factors will keep the prices of imported food at higher than normal levels. Overall, crop production has been negatively affected by drier than average conditions during the planting and growing seasons, most notably in the northern part of Eastern Equatoria and southern part of Jonglei. Furthermore, serious flooding experienced in parts of Jonglei, Warrap and Upper Nile states continues to inhibit crop production. These factors combined with decreased household purchasing power and disruption of livelihoods will continue to negatively impact food access by households, especially in food production deficit locations that rely on markets.

Similarly, the **nutrition situation has remained above the 15 percent WHO emergency threshold in most counties**, albeit with some slight improvements akin to a typical harvest season. The multi-causal nature of malnutrition prevents major improvements in the nutrition situation despite a considerable nutrition response. In 2016, 31 out of the 39 county level SMART surveys conducted classified malnutrition levels as *critical* with two as *very critical*. The worst affected state, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, held a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate of 28.1 percent and a Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rate of 9 percent. The vast lack of access to maternal, child and public health services, exacerbated by poor hygiene and sanitation practices, hyperinflation and high food prices and insecurity will continue to drive the level of malnutrition across the country.

Food and Nutrition Security Outlook: January to April 2017

The food security and nutrition situation in South Sudan is **likely to worsen between January to April 2017**, corresponding with the dry season and start of the lean season: projection based on trend analysis indicates that **around 4.6 million people are likely to be severely food insecure**². This denotes a 62 percent increase when compared to the same season last year and a 28 percent increase when compared to the current period (October—December 2016). Food and nutrition insecurity is anticipated to **further deteriorate during the peak of the lean season from May to July 2017 to the highest levels ever** in the lean period, unless the humanitarian response is stepped up further to an unprecedented level. The geographic spread of projected food insecurity based on CARI (Consolidate Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security) is shown in the map in the next page.

The foreseen deterioration can be attributed to a number of factors: these include continuing economic crisis compounded by spiral price increases, continued inflation, poor harvests and early depletion of household stocks, continued population displacements resulting from localized conflict, trade flows hampered by insecurity, disruption of livelihood activities, and impeded investments and, therefore, revenue generation. **Affected households are likely to continue asset stripping and using negative coping mechanisms, delaying or preventing recovery of already vulnerable livelihoods.** Poverty and food insecurity will likely continue to grow in urban areas and will be further worsened by insecurity, economic deterioration and disruption of livelihoods, increasing needs throughout the country.

In **the Greater Equatoria region**, food security is likely to worsen significantly due to the ongoing conflict that has led to displacement of the local population which has disrupted the second season cropping. It follows, therefore, that the harvest will be below normal to normal across the country. Distressing levels of malnutrition are expected, particularly in the Greater Bahr el Ghazal region, Unity state and some parts of the Greater Equatoria region where the GAM rate is already above the emergency threshold (GAM >15%).

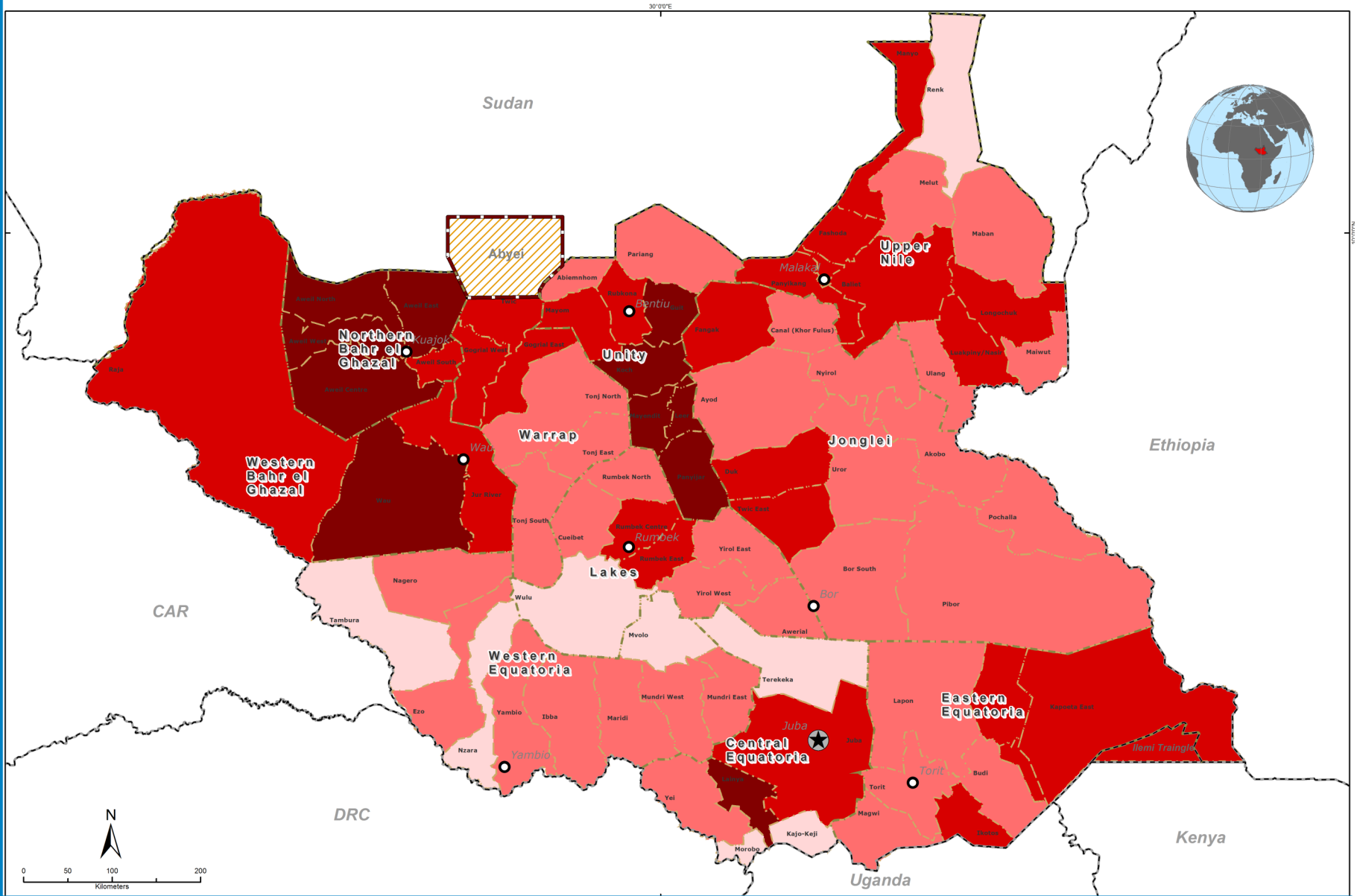


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Contacts

- **WFP VAM—South Sudan** juba.vam@wfp.org
- **George Fominyen**, Communications Officer george.fominyen@wfp.org

² 3.6 million likely to be in crisis and 1.0 million in emergency phases of IPC



Projected FS Situation JFMA 2017

- Food Secure
- Marginally Food Secure
- Moderate Food Insecure
- Severe Food Insecure

- National Capital
- State Capital

- International boundary line
- First level admin boundary
- Second level admin boundary
- Undetermined Boundary *
- Abyei Area **

Data sources: WFP, OCHA, UNOPS, UNMISS, MAJ, GAUL, Uni. of Berne
 The designations employed and the presentation of material in this map(s) do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of WFP concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory, city or sea, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
 * Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.
 ** Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.
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 Proj/Datum: Geographic/ WGS84



*WFP's projection analysis (CARI: Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security) is based on South Sudan IPC past trend information, population growth rates, insecurity, economic indicators, harvest projections and WFP food security and nutrition data.