Tajikistan - Phases of Food Insecurity
July 2010

Legend
CURRENT IPC PHASE
1 - Generally Food Secure
2 - Borderline Food Insecure
3 - Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis
4 - Humanitarian Emergency
5 - Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe

Risk of Worsening Phase

Nurkent

Total population in need: 3,700

Map produced by WFP Tajikistan.
This IPC round was made possible by the financial support of the Canadian Government and the active participation of the Government of Tajikistan.
The IPC is a tool that provides global standards and protocols for food security analysis and classification using a food security severity scale. Its cartographic protocols make it an efficient communication tool for decision-makers, including donors, agencies and governments to identify priorities for intervention. WFP and partners have been developing the IPC in Tajikistan since September 2009 holding consultations with experts in all regions to achieve the most accurate picture on food security.

**Overview**

For the period April to July 2010, results show that the eastern districts of Direct Rule District are the most affected by food insecurity. Districts in Sughd also show pockets of food insecurity. Khatlon and GBAO show less food insecurity than expected at this period of the year. The table below sets out districts identified as being in Phases 3 to 5 (see legend on the first page).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Population affected</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Forecast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jirgatol Taviladara</td>
<td>Phase 4: 20% or 15,000 Phase 3: 50% or 40,000</td>
<td>High food/fuel prices Failure/delay potato harvest High unemployment Kyrgyz border/trade closed Remoteness</td>
<td>Situation not likely to change as employment opportunities decrease and prices remain high. Animal owners should fare better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasht Nurobod Tojikobod</td>
<td>Phase 3: 50% or 105,000</td>
<td>High food/fuel prices Lower potato harvest Negative coping strategies</td>
<td>Potato harvest and higher remittances will decrease the number of households in phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roghun Fayzobod</td>
<td>Phase 3: 15% or 15,000</td>
<td>Lower harvest of cereals and vegetables High food/fuel prices Low daily wage rates Decrease in remittances Poor access to drinking water</td>
<td>Situation will remain the same as food prices remain high, water access low and nutrition status poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asht</td>
<td>Phase 3: 15% or 17,000</td>
<td>Higher proportion income used to purchase and save staple food Sell of productive assets Decrease in remittances Reduction of income from crops due to bad weather High food/fuel prices</td>
<td>Situation to remain the same due to high food prices, low harvest and stock. Some new job opportunities and remittances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zafarabad Mastchoh</td>
<td>Phase 3: 15% or 15,000</td>
<td>Decrease in remittances Fully or partly loss of crops food prices Lower availability Few job opportunities Poor water access</td>
<td>Phase 3 due to: food prices and loss of crop leading to shortage of stocks New jobs in the coming three months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghonchi Shahristan</td>
<td>Phase 3: 15% or 15,000</td>
<td>Natural hazards Damages to agriculture land and autumn harvest Availability and access to local food decreased (high prices) Diseases caused by poor nutrition and poor access to drinking water</td>
<td>Situation is expected to worsen due to high food prices and low harvest. Remittances should help some to stock food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zarafshan Valley</td>
<td>Phase 3: 25% or 40,000</td>
<td>High fuel and food prices Low productivity High import of food products Poor diet diversity Few revenues (pensions)</td>
<td>Situation will remain the same: high food prices, little income. Only families with remittances to fare better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurek</td>
<td>Phase 3: 15% or 3,700</td>
<td>Remoteness High prices for fuel and food Limited access to market Population highly dependent on pensions and government benefits for their cash income Lack of dietary diversity especially fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>Same situation: high food prices, difficulty with wheat stocks, livestock to provide assets for coping, some remittances to help vulnerable families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBAO Murghab</td>
<td>Phase 3: 45% or 6,000</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Food security: an analysis by region

Most of the rural households classify as “moderate/borderline food insecure” (Phase 2). Evidence however suggests that other parts of the country have a small to significant proportion of their population in “acute food and livelihood crisis” (Phase 3 – see table page 2). The map on page 1 provides a detailed account of the food security phase classification:

Direct Rule Districts

The most worrisome situation is in Jirgatol and Tavildara where the delay in the potato harvest (main income) due to heavy rains, the closure of the border/trade with Kyrgyzstan, the high food and fuel prices and repeated natural disasters could combine to push around 15,000 people into Phase 4. These households have extremely limited access to food while coping mechanisms are not really an alternative as most households have no food reserves or other sources of income.

Populations in Rasht, Tojikobod, Nurobod, Fayzobod and Roghun are also in a difficult situation (160,000 people in phase 3) due to low income and scarce employment opportunities but also to harvest failure and delay. On the other hand, a healthy harvest and proximity to regional markets allowed for a good food security situation in the Western part of DRD (Phase 1: generally food secure).

Sugh

The Sughd region present small pockets of Phase 3 often localized to areas with poor access to market, water, and employment. Mountainous parts of the region are especially affected by food security. The population in Phase 3 amounts to 89,000 people.

GBAO

The situation in GBAO remains characterized by moderate/borderline food insecurity (Phase 2). This is mainly due to high dependence on remittances and problematic market access. An estimated 6,000 people in the Murghab district are in Phase 3 due to their remoteness and to high staple food prices.

Khatlon

Households in Khatlon benefit from a good harvest despite some localized pockets of food insecurity due to natural disasters. High food prices, debts, lack of irrigation water and poverty keep most of the population in borderline food insecurity. In Nurek, 3,700 people are even classified under Phase 3 due to low production of food and reliance on expensive food imports.

The IPCC approach

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a standardized scale to describe the food security situation in a given country according to 5 Phases:

1- Generally food secure
2- Moderate/borderline food insecure
3- Acute food and livelihood crisis
4- Humanitarian emergency
5- Famine/humanitarian catastrophe

To date, the IPC has been piloted or being increasingly introduced in a total of 15 countries in the Great Horn of Africa, West and Southern Africa and Southern Asia. An additional 13 national governments have been introduced to the IPC through training events and workshops. The IPC is not an assessment method per se. It applies a convergence of evidence approach drawing from multiple data sources, methods and methodologies.

In Tajikistan, the Food Security Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) was carried out in a participatory manner involving a wide range of food security actors. The goal is to have an accurate picture of the food security situation after the harvest, before the winter and during the lean season. Two rounds have been piloted and in July/August, 6 workshops bringing together over 125 specialists gathered most data available on agriculture, water, markets, remittances and other essential indicators for food security in the country. The IPC analysis itself and the classification of the districts were done on the basis of technical consensus. Results were reviewed by the Global IPC experts and technical experts in Tajikistan. All evidence on the data analyzed is available in the annexes.

For more information on the Global IPC, visit www.ipcinfo.org or contact Thomas Vasseur, Integrated Phase Classification Global Expert at: Thomas.Vasseur@wfp.org

Because of endemic poverty and the weakness of state services, the population of Tajikistan is extremely vulnerable to external shocks especially during the winter season and the lean season from December to June when food insecurity is higher. The current high food and fuel prices, the effects of regional policy on import and export and the repetition of natural disasters (floods, mudflows, and extreme weather patterns) has stressed traditional coping mechanisms and adversely sapped the resilience of the poorest households.

A certain number of seasonal elements have however contributed to ease the situation. Summer is a season when households are typically better-off in terms of food security due to the summer harvest (including kitchen gardens) which means better food availability but also increased income (daily wage labor, increase of government salaries and pensions) and better food diversity. The agricultural season has been favorable this year thanks to timely and sufficient rainfall and possibly changes in crop patterns (increased planting of wheat crop instead of cotton crop). As a result, summer crop production for 2010 is expected to be at the same levels as last year. A decrease in livestock diseases and the good availability and prices of fodder should benefit households owning cattle, sheep and goats. The increase in remittances compared to last year will allow a majority of households to stock some food despite high food prices.

1 According to the National State Committee on Statistics, National Cereal production for the 2009/10 first season should reach 0.9 million tons.
Food security forecast for the pre-winter season

It is likely that enduring negative economic and trade conditions in the Central Asian Region and the Russian Federation aggravate the prevailing moderate/borderline food security situation (phase 2) and will evolve in some districts into a situation of acute food and livelihood crisis (phase 3). Increased unemployment, high food prices (especially imported wheat flour from Kazakhstan) might entail difficulties in economic access to food. This is essential for the coming four months as households will start building stocks for the winter. Moderate risk of humanitarian emergency

The situation eastern districts of DRD, Jirgatol and Tavildara will probably not improve before the winter apart from households benefiting from large livestock and potato production. Daily wage labor will further decrease in the coming months apart from work on the potato field and some herding. Food prices should remain high until Eid and prevent most vulnerable households from accessing most needed food and from building sufficient stocks for the winter months. The security situation might also play an important role as it might prevent assistance to be provided to the households most in need. Moderate risk of food and livelihood crisis

In GBAO, households in remote areas of Rushon, Shugnon and Roshtkala will start building stocks and high food prices, limited harvest and low income might prevent them from doing so. Remittances could help overcome these difficulties.

In the Eastern districts of Khatlon (Baljuvon, Khovaling, Muminobod, Shurobod) the situation should stay the same but some pockets of phase 3 will start appearing. Prices for all type of food will increase and parts of the population might not be able to store required food for the winter.

In the north, the districts of Asht, Mastchoh, Zafarabad, Ghonchi and Shahristan should remain in Phase 3. The districts of B. Gafurov, Rasulov and Spitamen might see borderline food insecure population fall into Phase 3. Low harvest in some parts of these districts, coupled with border issues and lack of imported wheat in the market continue to push prices up leaving vulnerable households with no means to access food and build stocks.

Response options

Despite ongoing short-term interventions in the affected areas informed by the IPC analysis (food distributions in the Rasht Valley by Mercy Corps and WFP), experts recommend to:

- Carry forward the implementation of projects that will address agriculture, water, nutrition, employment and food security in existing pockets of food insecurity so as to restore the resilience of those communities before the winter.
- Continue monitoring quarterly the food security situation. Particular attentions should be given to indicators concerning economic access to food.
- Increase efforts in monitoring nutrition in rural areas and combine agriculture, water and health programs with nutrition. Overall, experts noted the alarming absence of nutrition data at the district level and the lack of knowledge of nutrition among households.
- Provide access to affordable credits (short term low interest) for small businesses but, more importantly for farming. Credits would increase farmers’ access to most needed agricultural inputs.
- Deliver short-term assistance for the most food insecure households (in Phase 3 and Phase 4), as not to increase their vulnerability in the coming months and to help them prepare for the winter.
- Focus on disaster preparedness, agriculture trainings and employment schemes was also among important propositions of the experts to improve skills and resilience of the households in Phase 2 and 3.

Way forward

The next IPC consultations will take place late November 2010 in Dushanbe, Khujand, Khorog, Kulyab and Khorog. Data from August to November will be analyzed and the results will give an overview of the situation in Tajikistan before the winter 2010/2011. Recommendations and forecast will be made for the winter period as well. The IPC in Tajikistan is gathering more and more interest and is already use for targeting by donors. The costs of each IPC rounds are very low ($6,000) and make it the most affordable consensus-based targeting tool in the country. Unfortunately, the pilot is coming to an end and funding although the local Government already agreed on increasing their participation to reduce costs more funding is needed. For more information, please contact: Cedric Charpentier, Programme Officer, World Food Programme - cedric.charpentier@wfp.org

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