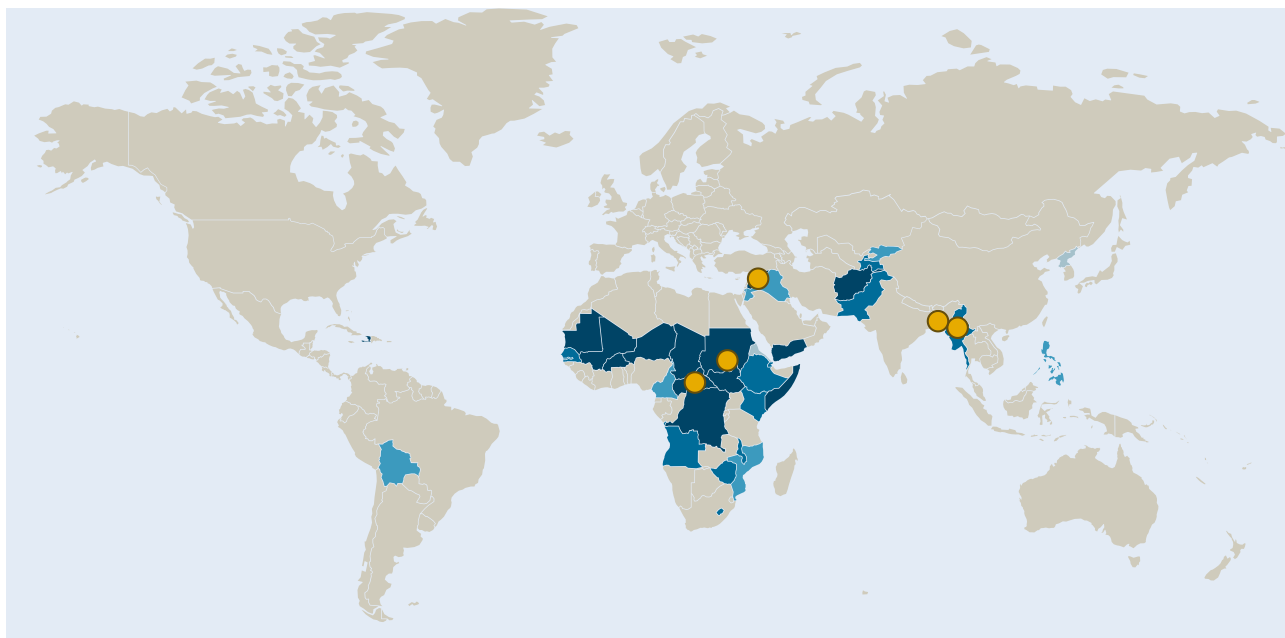




# GLOBAL OVERVIEW

May 2013



## Snapshot 13 – 21 May

In **Syria**, the Syrian military continued its offensive on opposition-controlled Qusayr, a strategic city in Homs province connecting the capital to the Mediterranean coast. In addition, fighting continues in all of the 14 governorates, apart from Tartous and As-Sweida. On 19 May, President al-Assad insisted he would not resign before elections in 2014. The UN estimates that over 6.8 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in Syria. While an estimated 4.25 million people are internally displaced, of which 1.25 million are concentrated in Aleppo and 705,200 in rural Damascus, the number of Syrians registered or awaiting registration in host countries has surpassed 1.5 million.

The crisis currently unfolding in the **Central African Republic** is now affecting the entire population of the country, some 4.6 million people, of which 2.3 million are children. According to UNICEF, the poor security situation across the country is severely hindering planned food distributions and other essential supplies from reaching beneficiaries. In addition, access is largely limited to towns and populations along main roads as of mid-May. Throughout the country, human rights abuses committed by Seleka rebel fighters, loyal to the new authorities, are reported by international organizations.

Military operations between warring parties have intensified in **Sudan's** Darfur. According to an estimate

### Severe humanitarian crisis

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Afghanistan  | Mauritania  |
| Burkina Faso | Niger       |
| ● CAR        | Somalia     |
| Chad         | South Sudan |
| DRC          | ● Sudan     |
| Haiti        | ● Syria     |
| Mali         | Yemen       |

### Humanitarian crisis

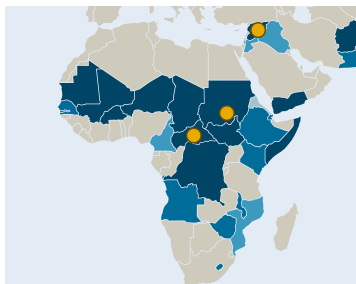
|          |            |
|----------|------------|
| Angola   | ● Myanmar  |
| Djibouti | oPt        |
| Ethiopia | Pakistan   |
| Gambia   | Senegal    |
| Kenya    | Tajikistan |
| Lesotho  | Zimbabwe   |
| Malawi   |            |

### Situation of concern

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| ● Bangladesh | Kyrgyzstan       |
| Bolivia      | Marshall Islands |
| Cameroon     | Mozambique       |
| Iraq         | Philippines      |
| Jordan       |                  |

### Watch list

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| DPRK | Eritrea |
|------|---------|



# AFRICA

## BURKINA FASO FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

Burkina Faso has been affected by insecurity and the on-going military intervention in Mali. As of 10 May, some 49,975 refugees were registered with UNHCR in Burkina Faso. The refugees are located at seven sites (Mentao, Damba, Fereiro, Goudebo, Gandafabou, Bobo Dioulasso, and Ouagadougou, the majority situated in the northern region of Sahel) which are recognized as refugee camps by the Government, as well as at several spontaneous settlements. A March assessment (jointly undertaken by WFP with partners), indicates an elevated prevalence of food insecurity in Malian refugee camps as well as Burkinabe host communities. An estimated 52% of the refugees and 58% of the host populations are affected by food insecurity, according to the report.

According to FEWSNet, Minimal food insecurity (IPC Phase 1) persists across the country. In general, limited household recourses to the market to purchase food have kept cereal prices stable since January 2013 and at levels close to, or slightly above (by no more than 12%) compared to the five-year average. These prices are helping to maintain good household food access.

Overall, the food supply situation has significantly improved in 2012-13 across the country. According to official production figures of last season's cereal production, from November to January, the total was close to 4.9 million metric tons, marking a 26.9% increase compared to the five-year average. Likewise, production of cash crops was up 16.5% and production of other food crops (cowpeas, yams, and sweet potatoes) was up 29.9% compared to the five-year average, according to FEWSNet.

Despite these improvements, the situation remains critical due to prolonged localized drought, high food prices, displacement, chronic poverty and the lingering effect of last year's food crisis. The Government of Burkina Faso declared a national emergency on 1 March 2012 due to food insecurity and malnutrition. According to a March report by the FAO food insecurity is affecting some 2 million people (15% of the population). The report states that the food insecure people are located mostly in the Sahel, North and East regions. Over the last months, civil strife in northern Mali has also contributed to increased food supply issues in parts of the country, notably in the Oudalan and Soum provinces of the northern Sahel regions, which face a high influx of refugees from Mali.

In 2012, the national Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate was 10.9%, compared to 10.3% in 2011, with the highest GAM rates in the regions of Centre North, East, North, Centre and Boucle de Mouhoun. According to UNICEF, more than 120,000 children <5 suffer from severe acute malnutrition. The number of new SAM admissions from January to mid-March 2013 amounted to 11,141 children.

Updated: 13/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, INSECURITY

### Highlights

According to UNICEF, the security situation across the country is severely hindering planned food distributions and other essential supplies from reaching beneficiaries. In addition, access is largely limited to towns and populations along main roads as of mid-May.

According to the UN envoy to CAR, the whole Seleka offensive has left, since December, more than 200,000 people internally displaced, a figure likely to increase as soon as updated data is available

**10 May:** A Human Rights Watch report stated that, in the wake of the coup, Seleka fighters went on a rampage, executing opponents, raping women and looting homes – acts that constitute war crimes. It also describes indiscriminate shootings in the capital and killings of people resisting the looting of their homes. To date, the situation in CAR is far from having stabilized.

### Political and Security Context:

On 4 April, Michael Djotodia, leader of the Seleka rebel coalition that seized the capital Bangui on 24 March, agreed to hold elections within 18 months, accepting the roadmap set up by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). On 13 April, the transition council, in charge of leading the country until the elections, elected him President by acclamation. Djotodia has however promised not to seek re-election at the end of the transition.

On 18 April, the ECCAS confirmed its support of the transition process agreeing also to Djotodia's election. In the wake of the ECCAS, the international community seems also to have come to terms with the country's takeover by the coalition, as long as it respects the roadmap. However, on 23 April, the EU restated its decision to not restore its aid program to CAR before it is certain of the credibility of the new Government.

The ECCAS has also agreed to deploy a 2,000 strong military force, under the Multinational Force of Central Africa (Fomac) framework, to help CAR's authorities in re-establishing security in the country and has also pledged to create a special fund to finance the transition process in CAR. At present, the FOMAC force in CAR numbers only

730 soldiers.

Following the siege of the capital, the situation remained unsafe in Bangui and across the country as abuses by ex-rebel fighters were widely reported. On 10 May, Human Rights Watch stated that, in the wake of the coup, Seleka fighters went on a rampage, executing opponents, raping women and looting homes – acts that constitute war crimes. The report, the first one to provide comprehensive information on the full extent of ongoing violence since the ousting of the former President, also describes indiscriminate shootings in the capital and killings of people resisting the looting of their homes. This analysis is largely in line with the scarce information that was reported by other international organizations over the past weeks. Several organizations, including UNICEF, have reported the ongoing re-recruitment of under 18 children, some of whom had been recently demobilized, into Seleka forces. To date, the situation in CAR is far from having stabilized and remains highly volatile.

Initially, violence had erupted in CAR, when the Seleka coalition, a grouping of five rebel movements, took up arms against the Government in early December 2012, claiming that the authorities had failed to honour the 2001 and 2007 peace deals under which fighters who laid down their arms were to receive compensation. In January 2013, a tentative peace agreement was not able to put a lasting end to violence between the two parties. Throughout March, the Seleka rebels continued their advance and took control of the towns of Gambo and Bangassou on the border with the DRC, as well as of the towns of Batangavo and Bouca, north of Bangui. Addressing President Bozizé an ultimatum, the Seleka rebels demanded the release of political prisoners and the withdrawal of foreign troops, brought into the country to support the Government military against the uprising. Considering the concessions made by the authorities to be insufficient, the rebel movement resumed its advance seizing Bangui and toppling President Bozizé who fled to Cameroon.

#### **Humanitarian context and needs:**

According to UNICEF, the humanitarian crisis is now affecting the entire population of the Central African Republic, an estimated 4.6 million people, of whom 2.3 million are children. Some 1 million children in the country are also still not attending school one month after the coup and almost 1.2 million people have now been cut off from access to basic services for almost four months.

**Displacement:** According to the UN envoy to CAR, the whole Seleka offensive has left, since December, more than 200,000 people internally displaced, a figure likely to increase as soon as updated data is available. Since December, an estimated 49,000 people have also sought refuge in Chad, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the latter of which hosts over 37,000 CAR refugees as of 3 May. On 25 April, UNHCR issued a warning advising governments worldwide against possible forced returns of refugees to CAR in light of the prevailing insecurity in the country. In addition to this, there are an estimated 17,000 mostly Congolese and Sudanese refugees in CAR.

**Access:** On 17 May, UNICEF reported that the security situation across the country is severely hindering planned food distributions and other essential supplies from reaching beneficiaries. In addition, it stated that for the small number of INGOs still operating in the interior, access is largely limited to towns and populations along main roads since use of

secondary roads is inadvisable.

Since mid-March, humanitarian access – which was already limited to a third of the Seleka-controlled areas, excluding 300,000 people in the southeast- has been further hampered with the departure of many INGOs, according to UNICEF. As of 3 May, OCHA reported that information on the needs outside of Bangui remains limited. For humanitarian actors, access is likely to become even more challenging with the rainy season starting in May.

**Health:** On 9 April, a WHO report indicated that health needs in Bangui were still critical. Some 3.2 million in the country are reported to be living without health care and 12 million have been cut off from basic services since December. According to UNICEF, a measles epidemic in Bangui has been confirmed and the organization will be coordinating a vaccination campaign in late May.

**Food Security and Malnutrition:** A recent IPC seasonal analysis classified the entire country in either Phase 2 (Stressed) or Phase 3 (Crisis). In 9 out of 16 prefectures, the prevalence of severe acute malnutrition in children <5 is above the emergency threshold of 2%. Chronic poverty was identified as the general cause of food and nutrition insecurity, with civil insecurity exacerbating conditions in the north and north-east. In Bangui, WFP reports that food prices have risen by 29% in January and cereal prices are about 30% above the five-year average due to low market supplies, according to FEWSNET. OCHA reports that more than 80,000 people are estimated to be at risk of severe food shortages during the upcoming lean season, while 13,500 children under the age of 5 are at risk of Severe Acute Malnutrition.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

#### **CHAD FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY**

Chad has witnessed an escalating influx of migrants and refugees from neighbouring countries since March. As reported by OCHA, more than 50,000 people (an estimated 28,500 Sudanese refugees and 21,300 Chadian returnees) have crossed the border from Sudan into Chad in April. This marks the largest influx of people from Sudan into Chad since 2005. The displaced people have arrived in two waves. In March, displacement was caused by intertribal violence between the Rezeigat and Beni Hussein tribes in Northern Darfur, and since beginning of April the main cause of displacement into Chad has been the spreading violence between the Misseriya and Salamat tribes. Most of the latest arrivals are reportedly women and children.

On Chad's southern border, ongoing political turmoil in the Central African Republic (CAR) has led to a rising number of refugees and returnees crossing into the country since December. An estimated 7,000 people, refugees and returnees, have entered Chad. They add to the estimated total number of Central African refugees of 58,000 as reported by OCHA.

In Chad, two years of continued climatic shocks, including erratic rainfall in 2011, have caused significant food security concerns in 2012 continuing into 2013. According to a March assessment carried out by WFP and the Chadian Government in 18 regions across

the country, 13% of the households are facing severe food insecurity and another 9% are facing moderate food insecurity. In total, 2.1 million people are reported food insecure. The nutritional situation in Chad's Sahel belt is at critical levels with a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate surpassing the emergency threshold of 15% in 9 out of 22 regions, according to OCHA. The areas most affected are Batha (25% GAM), Wadi Fira (22%), Salamat (22%), Beg (21%), and Kanem (21%).

The current situation however represents a significant amelioration from the 2011 critical levels. Good 2012-13 harvests have allowed very poor and poor households to replenish their food reserves while market prices across the country remained mostly stable and were even occasionally trending downwards. According to FEWSNet, food security conditions will steadily improve with the rebuilding of the production capacity and the replenishment of livelihood assets. Nevertheless, structurally deficient regions will continue to face a shortage of grain.

According to UNICEF, an estimated 126,000 children will still suffer from severe acute malnutrition in 2013. Across the country, many households have accumulated large debts during the lean period in 2012 and poor families will be forced to sell much of their produce immediately after harvest. In 2012, 149,963 children were admitted for severe acute malnutrition (SAM), well above the 127,300 forecast.

On 18 February, a yellow fever outbreak was confirmed by WHO in the town of Goz Beida. There were 139 suspected yellow fever cases and 9 deaths reported. A vaccination campaign against the disease was launched in Djabal camp for Sudanese refugees in the east of the country. Neighbouring Sudan is also experiencing a yellow fever outbreak in 35 localities in Darfur with 849 suspected cases and 171 deaths (case-fatality rate of 20.1%) as of 6 January 2013.

Insecurity, particularly in eastern Chad and in certain areas in southern Chad, continues to limit humanitarian access.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO** **CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY**

Over the last week, new violent clashes between rebels and government troops were reported in the conflict-prone eastern part of Democratic Republic of Congo, notably in the North Kivu province that is dominated by rebel movements. According to the local media reports published in May, North Kivu province currently harbours some 27 different military groups, making it extremely insecure. Since February, clashes occurred between several armed groups throughout the province while numerous human rights abuses by armed militias and governmental troops have been reported by the UN.

On 20 May, rebels from the Tutsi-dominated M23 movement (March 23 Movement – one of the most prominent rebel armed groups based in eastern areas of the DRC) and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) fought north of Goma, the regional capital of North Kivu province in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo that the rebels had occupied briefly in November. To date, no casualty figures are available. The renewed clashes are the first to happen since the rebel movement withdrew from Goma in December. These developments may clearly jeopardize the recent talks conducted

between M23 leaders and the authorities regarding a possible peace deal and the current reintegration of some of the insurgents who laid down arms into the army. The peace talks currently remain stalled.

In parallel, clashes between FARDC and a local militia, a Mai Mai group, have also been reported next to the town of Beni, further north of Goma on 15 May. Although reports on casualties remain difficult to ascertain, some sources reported that at least 23 militia fighters and 8 soldiers were killed in the series of clashes in Beni.

Renewed fighting in DRC occurred as the first troops due to be part of a new UN intervention brigade arrived this month to the country. On 28 March, the UN Security Council unanimously approved the creation of a brigade of more than 3,000 troops from South Africa, Malawi, and Tanzania with a mandate to conduct “targeted offensive operations” against rebels in eastern DRC. However, on 12 April, a spokesman for the M23 stated that the rebel group would retaliate if attacked by the peacekeeping brigade. The leader of the rebel group accused the UN of promoting war while peace talks are ongoing.

In March, violence in the Katanga province was marked when nearly 250 rebels from the separatist militia group Mai-Mai Kata Katanga attacked a military camp and the Provincial Governor's office in the country's southern mining hub of Lubumbashi. At least 35 people were killed and 16 injured in the fighting, before the rebels forced their way into a UN compound and surrendered on 24 March, according to the UN. Some 87 fighters, including foreign fighters from Rwanda, of the M23 have surrendered to the UN peacekeeping force in April with 13 doing so last week.

Kata Katanga is one of several local militias, or Mai Mai groups, operating in the province. While the insecurity is most extreme within an area between the towns of Manono, Pweto and Mitwaba, the humanitarian effects have spread to half of Katanga's 22 territories, according to OCHA. In April, clashes between Mai-Mai groups and FARDC have led to new population displacement in the Katanga province, according to OCHA.

In late April, clashes between two rival militias Nduma Defence of Congo (NDC) and the Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (APLCS) triggered the displacement of an additional 1,000 people in Walikale area. Although part of the displaced has reportedly returned on 3 May, the atmosphere remains volatile in the region where FARDC has also been conducting military operations. In February-March, the conflict between the FARDC and the APCLS had already displaced an estimated 75,000 people, according to IOM.

In March, internal clashes between two factions of the rebel group M23 in North Kivu routed out the faction led by Bosco Ntaganda to Rwanda, with its fighters disarmed and its leaders arrested. The defeat of the Ntaganda-affiliated faction of M23 came after weeks of infighting and could open the way for rival rebel leader Sultani Makenga to sign a peace deal with Kinshasa, bringing an end to a year-long rebellion by the M23 in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Talks between the M23 rebels and the Government are scheduled to restart in May after they stalled in early February following dissensions in M23's top leadership. As reported by the UN in early May, governmental troops and M23 rebels have both committed human rights infringements while fighting in North and South Kivus provinces in autumn 2012.

In South Kivu, 52,500 new displacements were registered due to conflict since January. However, according to OCHA, some IDPs began to return to their homes since February leading to a decrease of the overall number of displaced in the area. As of 31 March, OCHA estimated that some 702,000 people currently remain displaced in South Kivu, notably because of clashes between FARDC and local militias that progressively established a stronghold in the province leading to more insecurity. In North Kivu, OCHA reported that over 970,000 people remain displaced as of 25 April. In addition, at least 353,000 people were reportedly displaced in Katanga province in March.

Overall, as of May, OCHA had reported that an estimated 2.6 million people were displaced as a result of fighting between the Congolese army and various rebel groups in the Kivus, Maniema and Katanga provinces in the east of the country. Although the number of displaced countrywide has decreased by some 40,000 people over the last two months, protracted conflict has led to more displacements in several parts of the country during April. In addition, an estimated 450,000 Congolese refugees are residing in neighbouring countries.

DRC is facing increasing numbers of refugees from the Central African Republic. Between February 7 and 11 March more than 22,000 refugees fled Mobaye in CAR for the DRC for fear of attacks by Seleka rebels. Mobaye is a Central African border town close to positions held by the rebel Seleka coalition. According to several sources, there are currently more than 15,000 Central African refugees in parts of North Ubang needing food and health assistance. As of 2 May, an estimated 37,000 CAR refugees have been registered in DRC according to UNHCR. The number of CAR refugees in DRC is likely to further increase while instability in CAR remains widespread.

The renewed conflict in eastern DRC has significantly contributed to the deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation, according to WFP. The December 2012 IPC analysis reports that 6.4 million people are in acute food insecurity and livelihood crisis (IPC phases 3 and 4). With 70% of the rural population without access to clean drinking water, there is an increased risk of cholera. A cholera outbreak continues to affect 9 of 11 provinces, with around 32,000 cases during 2012. As of 26 March, a cholera outbreak is suspected in Pweto where more than 300 cases have been registered over the last two weeks, resulting in 25 deaths, according to the UN. The west of DRC, although relatively stable compared to the east, faces chronic food insecurity due to isolation, the lack of social infrastructure and effects of several aggravating economic shocks.

Over the second week of April, heavy rains have affected an estimated 2,500 people in Zongo, Province Orientale, according to OCHA. Some 10,300 cholera cases have been registered in Katanga province since January 2013. This is the result of the population's lack of access to drinking water, poor hygiene conditions and poor sanitation.

Humanitarian access has been limited due to mountainous and volcanic terrain coupled with widespread and shifting insecurity. The lack of asphalted roads in parts of the country, notably in Maniema province, is also hindering aid delivery.

Throughout the country, humanitarian access is also hindered by ongoing protracted localized conflict, especially in the South Kivu, Orientale, Maniema and Katanga provinces. The latest escalation of hostilities between militias and government troops has further hampered humanitarian access in North Kivu province. Tensions between aid

workers and the local population have also been reported.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **MALI CONFLICT, FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY**

The security situation in the three northern regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal remains volatile. On 10 May, Islamists believed to belong to the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) undertook a coordinated attack on Malian and African troops. Five suicide bombers detonated explosives at a military checkpoint in Gossi near Timbuktu, injuring two Malian soldiers. The attacks highlight the continued threat posed by Islamist militants, as well as the growing coordination of their operations against African and French forces. Over the last month, militants have carried out several attacks, using landmines, IED's, suicide bombings, and various guerrilla methods. The attacks have been mostly focused on military checkpoints and have so far not caused mass casualties. Since the start of military operations on 11 January, French and Malian troops, supported by ECOWAS and the AU, have removed Islamist militants from the major northern towns.

On 25 April, the UN Security Council unanimously approved the creation of a 12,640-strong peacekeeping force in Mali starting 1 July. The force – to be known as MINUSMA – will take over the authority from the current UN backed African force, AFISMA, although most of the AFISMA force is likely to become part of the peacekeeping operation. The peacekeeping force will be able to request support from French troops when they are under imminent and serious threat and upon the request of the secretary-general. On 5 May, forces to be included in the MINUSMA started arriving in Mali and an estimated 6,300 troops has already been deployed in the country.

Meanwhile, French forces continued their planned phase-out, and are now relocated in Gao. The continued volatile security situation raises concerns of the impact of the announced withdrawal of French troops from Mali, which is planned to be downsized to 2,000 from 4,500 by July this year. France has proposed to maintain a permanent force of 1,000 troops in Mali to continue fighting armed Islamist militants, according to diplomatic sources. The Chadian President Déby has announced that the country will begin to withdraw its troops, only keeping some of its 2,000 soldiers.

Humanitarian access continues to improve in central regions and parts of the North and aid is increasing in the accessible parts, according to OCHA. Aid activities in other parts of the North, are limited due to continued insecurity and banditry.

An estimated 467,000 people are estimated to have been displaced by the current conflict. According to OCHA, as of 30 April, there are an estimated 310,783 IDPs in Mali compared to 261,000 as of late January. UNHCR reports that, as of 8 May, some 174,129 Malians are registered as refugees in neighbouring countries, with 74,024 in Mauritania, 50,000 in Niger and 49,975 in Burkina Faso.

As larger areas of central and northern Mali are secured, UNHCR estimates that a significant number of displaced people will return to their homes, although considerable challenges and poor conditions remain for a large share of those returning.

Access to basic social services (water, education, health) remains limited in the North

largely because of the low return of civil servants, the destruction of infrastructure and the lack of materials to support basic services according to OCHA.

The education of some 700,000 Malian children has been disrupted during the crisis, but recently schools have gradually started to reopen in Gao and Timbuktu regions, with 321 of 1,030 schools working to date.

Recent assessments warn of a looming food security crisis in northern Mali. WFP reports that one household in five faces extreme food shortages in northern regions like Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal with a significant deterioration of household food consumption over the past weeks. Around 15% of children in Mali suffered from acute malnutrition, even before the crisis. Three quarters of them are girls. The depletion of household food stocks, a decline in livestock sales (due to low demand), and the lack of income-generating opportunities for most residents of conflict-affected areas in northern Mali are severely curtailing household food access. According to WFP, food security conditions are at Crisis levels (IPC Level 3) in the north, with pockets of Emergency levels (IPC Phase 4) in remote areas of Kidal. The whole north (regions of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu) are expected to experience Emergency levels during the May to July lean season if insecurity continues to disrupt pastoralist livelihoods.

In total, the FAO reported that an estimated 4.6 million people (32% of the population) in Mali were food insecure as of March. An estimated 660,000 children <5 suffer from acute malnutrition in 2013, including 210,000 from severe acute malnutrition.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **MAURITANIA FOOD INSECURITY**

According to FAO, close to 1 million people (30% of the overall population) are affected by food insecurity in Mauritania as of March 2013, and more than 105,000 children <5 suffer from Global Acute Malnutrition, compared to 90,000 in 2011. The Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate for children <5 has been around 12% since 2008. The highest malnutrition rates have been recorded in the Hodh Ech Chargui (16% GAM), Assaba (16.4%), Brakna (17%) and Tagant (18.2%) regions in the south-east of the country.

As of late April, FEWSNET reported that the food security situation should remain stable and most of the poor households throughout the country would remain in IPC Phase 1 until September. However, poor agro-dominant households in north-western agro-pastoral areas and south-eastern rainfed agriculture zones are expected to move into Stressed food security conditions (IPC Phase 2) between March/April and June, along with northern households impacted by the protracted drought in that area since last year. According to FEWSNET, as of 27 February, an estimated 5,000 farm households (25,000 people) were already experiencing Stressed food security conditions (IPC Phase 2). Potential threats to food security include high prices for millet, an essential dietary staple. However, sorghum prices in December 2012 were 17 % below their levels of a year earlier.

The number of Malian refugees has levelled off over the past weeks. As of 21 March, the latest figures remain at over 75,000 as stated by the UNHCR. Mauritania is the single largest recipient of Malian refugees who are mostly settled in the Mbéra camp. 90% of Malian refugees are women and children. According to Médecins Sans Frontières, the

living conditions of Malian refugees in Mauritania remain “deplorable” while humanitarian actors have been slow to respond. As reported by UNICEF, many refugee children suffer from malnutrition.

*Updated: 13/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **NIGER FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT**

Niger is coping with four concurrent disasters: the Sahel food crisis, the Malian refugee crisis, flooding and a cholera outbreak. According to a March report from FAO, 6.4 million people were affected by food insecurity (42% of the population), due to consecutive poor harvests, drought and rising food prices.

Throughout the country, households’ incomes are generally considered average to good this year, and should allow households to purchase sufficient cereal to meet food needs. According to FEWSNET on 10 May, even without assistance, most poor households should be able to meet their basic food and non-food needs and will experience only Minimal levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 1). However, in Diffa, higher prices, the destruction of pepper crops and the effect of the conflict in Nigeria on cross border livestock trading are likely to expose poor households in agro-pastoral and farming areas of this region to Stress levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 2) between July and September. Overall, OCHA estimated on 12 May that at least 800,000 people will require food aid in Chad in 2013 despite last year’s good harvest.

As reported by UNICEF on 7 April, 81,305 children under-five have been admitted to therapeutic feeding centres for severe acute malnutrition (SAM), while another 115,758 have been receiving treatment for moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).

Compared to the five-year average, the prices of dry cereals are rising on most markets, with millet (17% to 41%), sorghum (5% to 39%) and maize (2% to 21%) displaying the largest increases. Although prices followed a similar dynamic last year, the scale of the increase was smaller. As a result, many Nigeriens who are yet to recover from previous crises are unable to afford market prices. According to a WFP published in early May, the price of millet, the main staple, is still above last year’s crisis levels and is expected to further increase in the upcoming months.

According to UNHCR, an estimated 7,000 people crossed into Niger since the start of the military intervention in Mali on 11 January. Overall, OCHA estimates that there are currently some 60,000 refugees from Mali in Niger. They continue to place a significant stress on the country with the large majority settling in the regions hardest hit by the nutrition and food security crisis.

A cholera outbreak has been reported in the Tilabery region of Niger, with 198 cases and six deaths reported as of 17 May, including cases in the refugee camps and Niamey. The Nigerien Ministry of Health has officially declared an epidemic. There is a high risk that the disease could spread along the Niger River. In 2012, more than 5,785 cholera cases and 110 deaths were reported country-wide.

As of 7 April, 1,470 suspected cases of measles have been reported by UNICEF, the large majority being in the region of Tillbéri (50%) and in the district of Filingué (30%) where

refugee camps are located. The levels of measles mark a significant increase compared to the same period in 2012.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## SOMALIA CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY

### Highlights

As reported by OCHA in early May, since the early beginning of the main rainy season – the Gu – in mid-March, an estimated 50,000 people were displaced and 6,400 ha of crops damaged by floods

According to FEWSNET, as of May, an estimated 1.05 million people in Somalia are in need of food assistance at Stressed and Crisis levels. According to the Red Cross, the majority of the people in need are located in South and Central Somalia

**9 May:** According to the numbers released by the UN, an estimated 3,000 African Union peacekeepers have been killed in the country since 2007.

### Political Context:

Conflict remains widespread in Somalia while the country is still struggling to curb an Islamist insurgency and achieve stability. The al-Shabaab movement, affiliated to al-Qaeda, continues to conduct terrorist attacks and fight the government forces in different parts of the country. Although security in the capital Mogadishu itself has improved since its lowest point in August 2011, attacks by al-Shabaab fighters continue to plague Somali urban centres and transport axes. As suggested by UNHCR in April, the revival of al-Shabaab activity in Mogadishu and nearby regions is likely to continue in the coming weeks.

On 6 and 8 May, clashes between government forces and al-Shabaab fighters were reported in Doble town and west of Kismayo in the Lower Juba region. At least one governmental soldier was killed and three seriously injured in the fighting. On 5 May, an attack in Mogadishu against a convoy carrying Qatari officials killed 12 people. In April, dozens of people were killed as a result of terrorist attacks across the country. On 14 April, in one of the deadliest attacks this year, some 34 people were killed outside the law courts in Mogadishu after two car bombs successively exploded and a 9-man suicide commando attacked the building before engaging into a fight against the government forces.

According to the numbers released by the African Union (AU) on 9 May, an estimated 3,000 AU peacekeepers have been killed in the country since 2007. Despite recent success enjoyed by Somali forces and AU peacekeepers against al-Shabaab fighters, tensions exist between the different military forces involved and the local authorities to the extent that, on 22 April, Ethiopia officially announced its wish to remove its troops from

Somalia. During March-April, the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Xudur, a town in the southern Bakool region, led to its immediate occupation by al-Shabaab while fighting has been ongoing in the area.

In early March, the UN Security Council decided to maintain the deployment of the AU Mission until February 2014, and partially lift its 20-year weapons ban for one year to boost the Government's capacity to fight off Al-Shabaab insurgency. In a similar move, the US Government declared that Somalia was now again eligible to receive defense articles and services, which may be seen as a tangible illustration of the improving relations between Washington and Mogadishu.

### Humanitarian Context and Needs:

**Displacement:** An estimated 1.1 million Somalis are currently internally displaced according to UNHCR, settling mainly in the South-Central region. In March-April, thousands of new displaced were reported in the vicinity of Xudur after the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from the area. The flooding that affected the country has also led to the displacement of an additional 50,000 people, notably in the Jowhar and Baidoa areas.

Over 1 million Somali are living as refugees outside of the country, mostly Kenya (507,800), Ethiopia (239,000) and Yemen (229,000) as of April.

**Disaster:** As reported by OCHA, with the early beginning of the main rainy season – the Gu – in mid-March, an estimated 50,000 people were displaced and 6,400 ha of crops damaged by floods.

**Access:** In southern and central Somalia, humanitarian access has remained challenging, with several incidents against humanitarian personnel and cases of interference of aid delivery recorded over the past month, according to OCHA. The withdrawal of al-Shabaab from key towns in southern Somalia has permitted an increase in the international presence in some areas.

While the insurgents' attacks are rarely directly targeting aid workers, they hinder the planning of humanitarian operations. For instance, the attack in Mogadishu on 5 May led to the closure of main roads in the capital, hampering movement of aid workers and supplies, particularly to people in settlements.

**Food Security and Malnutrition:** According to FEWSNET, as of May, an estimated 1.05 million people in Somalia are in need of food assistance at Stressed and Crisis levels. According to the Red Cross, the majority of the people in need are located in South and Central Somalia.

Between October 2010 and April 2012, the famine in Somalia has led to the deaths of some 258,000 people according to new estimates provided by OCHA in May.

FEWSNET reported that food security has recently reduced to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels through most parts of Somalia thanks to humanitarian aid, a very good cereal harvest, estimated to be the largest in the past ten years, higher-than-average livestock prices, and improved milk availability. However, coastal areas of the central and northeastern regions are likely to face deteriorating food security between May and

September due to declining livestock production.

The Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) reported that, in January 2013, an estimated 215,000 children <5 were acutely malnourished, of which at least 45,000 were severely malnourished. This is attributed to the lack of adequate health infrastructure and poor feeding practices. During the April to June rainy season, possible outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea and measles may lead to a deterioration of the situation. To date, a steady increase in cases of acute watery diarrhoea in Banadir and Lower Shabelle regions has been registered with 565 cases in February alone according to OCHA.

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## **SOUTH SUDAN CONFLICT, FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT**

### **Highlights**

**18 May:** At least 29 people were killed when cattle raiders from the South Sudanese minority group Murle opened fire on members of the Jikany minority in a village in Upper Nile state, according to local officials. A total of 23,350 people have been affected by cattle raiding and related violence in Jonglei and Upper Nile States between February and April.

**14 May:** Five people dead in attacks at the border between Mayom and Koch counties, in what seems to be reprisal attacks from previous cattle raids.

**12-13 May:** In a recent series of events, compounds of foreign aid organizations were raided by uniformed men in the center of Pibor town in Jonglei state. MSF reports that their hospital in Pibor County, the only medical facility for the County, was sabotaged and damaged, leaving the hospital temporarily inoperative. According to MSF, this affects access to healthcare for some 100,000 people in the region.

**9 May:** Seven people were killed in renewed tribal fighting between two Lou-Nuer clans in Akobo county.

**8 May:** David Yau Yau rebels seized the town of Boma in Jonglei state after fighting with the SPLA. Civilians, possibly numbering in thousands, were displaced in the region after clashes intensified between the SPLA and the David Yau Yau rebel group.

**7 May:** Sudan announced that cross-border oil flows from South Sudan had resumed and the first cross-border shipment was received at Heglig.

**4 May:** The killing of the paramount chief of the Nine Ngock Dinka tribes of Abyei by Misseriya tribesmen poses a grave threat to stability and peace between Khartoum and Juba.

### **Political and Security Context:**

March was marked by agreements signed on border security and oil exports and various gestures of openness, which translated into tensions between Sudan and South Sudan easing. On 7 May, Sudan announced that cross-border oil flows from South Sudan had resumed and the first cross-border shipment was received at Heglig.

Ethnic clashes and violence continue to affect large parts of South Sudan. On 4 May, Misseriya tribesmen killed the paramount chief of the Nine Ngock Dinka tribes of Abyei. This incident between the two tribes, who both live in the contested area of Abyei and are respectively allied to Khartoum and Juba, may trigger renewed conflict in the region and jeopardize the rapprochement between Sudan and South Sudan. It has led the African Union to call for an urgent meeting to discuss the situation in Abyei.

Similarly, the precarious security situation prevailing in the troubled Jonglei State stems from the protracted conflict between rogue armed groups and official troops, as well as from ongoing inter-tribal fighting. On 9 May, renewed tribal fighting between two Lou-Nuer clans in Akobo county led to seven people being killed and another 15 injured. The conflict between the Yau Yau rebel group, who calls itself South Sudan Democratic Army (SSDA), and the South Sudan Army (SPLA) also escalated since early March, after Juba conducted a major operation against the SSDA, as part of a disarmament campaign started ahead of the upcoming rainy season. The Yau Yau rebel group seized the town of Boma after fighting erupted in the Maruwa Hills.

Cattle raiding is a recurrent issue that continues to affect people throughout South Sudan. In a most recent event on 18 May, at least 29 people were killed when cattle raiders from the South Sudanese minority group Murle opened fire on members of the Jikany minority in a village in Upper Nile state, according to local officials.

On May 14, five people were killed in what seems to be reprisal attacks from cattle raids the previous week. The attack took place at the border between Mayom and Koch counties.

Overall, at least 23,350 people have been affected by cattle raiding and related violence in Akobo East, Akobo West in Jonglei State and Ulang in Upper Nile between February and April as reported by OCHA.

### **Humanitarian context and needs:**

**Displacement:** Although the overall scale of the displacement and of humanitarian needs in Jonglei State remains largely unknown due to limited humanitarian access, it has been reported that civilians, possibly numbering in thousands, were displaced in the region after clashes intensified between the SPLA and the David Yau Yau rebel group.

**Access:** Insecurity, poor infrastructure and seasonal rains continue to severely hamper humanitarian access nationwide. In Jonglei State, several organizations restricted their operations in the area in March due to repeated attacks against humanitarian workers. In a recent series of events on 12-13 May, compounds of foreign aid organizations were raided by uniformed men in the center of Pibor town in Jonglei state. MSF reports that their hospital in Pibor County, the only medical facility for the County, was sabotaged and



damaged, leaving the hospital temporarily inoperative. According to MSF, this affects access to healthcare for some 100,000 people in the region.

**Food Security and Malnutrition:** Although the food security situation has improved in the western, central and eastern regions of the country, 4.6 million people will remain in need of food or livelihoods support in 2013, according to the UN. Possible causes include: diminished cross border trade, inter-communal clashes, increasing number of IDPs, returnees and refugees, fuel scarcity and high food prices.

In parts of the Jonglei State, and in Abyei area, most households are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity. In Unity, Warrap, and Lakes States, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity is also expanding to counties previously Stressed (IPC Phase 2), according to FEWSNet.

**Health:** OCHA reported that the Hepatitis E outbreak, which started in mid-2012 and peaked in February 2013 in refugee camps in Unity and Upper Nile States, affecting 9,671 people and resulting in 170 deaths as of 28 April, is now under control.

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## **SUDAN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT**

On April 12, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir visited South Sudan for the first time since the split in 2011 pledging again his commitment to peace and to normal relations with the neighbouring country.

The countries signed a new technical agreement on the establishment of a safe demilitarized border zone, the deployment of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the activation of all agreed security-related mechanisms in March. The two states also agreed on an overall implementation plan with timelines for the coordinated implementation of all elements of the 27 September 2012 agreements. This includes the resumption of oil production by 24 March and the withdrawal of troops from the border areas to be completed by 5 April. Monitors are to verify the withdrawal of Sudanese and South Sudanese forces from the buffer zone, 10 kilometres (6.2 miles) on each side of the 1956 border. In early April, South Sudan re-launched crude oil production and the first oil cargo is expected to reach Sudan's Red Sea export terminal at Port Sudan by 20 May. On 7 May, Sudan announced that cross-border oil flows had already resumed and the first cross-border shipment was received at Heglig.

On 26 April, accepting to join the ongoing peace process, several thousands of South Sudanese rebels reportedly surrendered to Juba and returned home from alleged rear bases in Sudan. Since its independence, South Sudan has been struggling to contain insurgents that it claimed were supported by Sudan. The same day Khartoum and Juba agreed to open 10 crossings along their joint border to boost travel and trade between the two countries.

Nationwide, the Global Acute malnutrition (GAM) levels for children under-five stands at 16.4%, above the emergency threshold of 15%. The national inflation rate in March was 47.9 %, a 0.9 % increase since February. The food price inflation rate has increased from 43.6% to 45% from January to February and non-food inflation has increased by about

12% (from 57% in February). It has further slightly increased in March. The rising cereal prices are likely to reduce access to food for low-income households, but are not expected to bring significant changes to food security in relatively secure areas of Sudan.

As of 15 March, an estimated 4.3 million people are facing Crisis and Emergency levels of food insecurity in Sudan, according to OCHA. 3.7 million people face Stressed and Crisis (IPC Phase 2 and 3) levels of food insecurity and 560,000 people are experiencing Emergency (IPC 4) levels of food insecurity, compared to 4.6 million people in July 2012. Some 80% of the food insecure population is in the conflict-affected areas of Darfur, South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Abyei. The slight decrease is mostly attributed to a good harvest this year. The total area planted during the 2012-13 season is more than double the previous year's figure, and yields are expected to be significantly higher than last year due to favourable rainfall and decreased pest infestations. A surplus of 1.4 million MT of sorghum and millet is expected. In spite of the good harvest, Stressed and Crisis levels of food insecurity persist in South Kordofan, Blue Nile, Darfur, and Abyei due to the impacts of conflict on production, market access, and livelihood options. The current escalation of insecurity is particularly affecting the food security situation in South Darfur.

In Abyei, a contested border area between South Sudan and Sudan where a self-determination referendum is to take place in October 2013, most of the households are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity according to FEWSNET. Due to high food prices because of restricted cross-border trade with South Sudan and the decrease of the cultivation areas, local communities in Abyei have already expanded their livelihoods strategies, switching to coping mechanisms employed in times of severe food insecurity. As more and more people are returning to the area where tensions eased in the wake of the signing of the agreement between Juba and Khartoum, it is likely that the humanitarian assistance will have to increase to keep up with rising needs as the returnees are expected to heavily rely on the host community for food.

On May 4, 2013, members of the Misseriya tribe have killed the paramount chief of the Nine Ngock Dinka tribes of Abyei while the latter was travelling with a convoy escorted by the United Nations Interim Forces for Abyei (UNISFA) back from a meeting with the Sudanese authorities. Two Ethiopian UN peacekeepers along with at least 17 Misseriya tribesmen were also reportedly killed the clash. The Misseriya and the Ngock Dinka tribes both inhabit Abyei, although the former is allied to Khartoum while the latter is closer to Juba. This incident may have major importance and trigger renewed conflict in the region by completely annihilating the rapprochement Sudan and South Sudan achieved in March. While all actors are showing a very relative restraint, the African Union has urgently called for an urgent meeting to discuss the situation in Abyei.

On 29 October 2012, Sudan's Federal Ministry of Health declared a yellow fever outbreak in seven localities in Central and South Darfur. As of 6 January, the total number of suspected cases had reached 849, including 171 deaths (CFR 20.1%). The majority of cases are reported from Central Darfur, North Darfur and West Darfur. An emergency mass vaccination campaign targeting 3.4 million people is currently being implemented. In addition, on 12 December, the Ministry of Health of West Darfur announced an outbreak of Hepatitis D in the state.

Nationwide, an estimated 2.5 million people are currently displaced due to food insecurity

and conflict. As of early May, there are also an estimated 190,000 Sudanese refugees in South Sudan and 32,000 Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia according to UNHCR. According to Government and UNHCR sources, there are between 220,000 and 350,000 people of South Sudanese origin still in Sudan in early May. UNHCR and the Government of Sudan have as of now registered 109,000 people for voluntary return. The UNHCR also reports that there are 142,000 refugees originating from other countries in Sudan.

## Darfur

As reported by OCHA in mid-May, an estimated 300,000 people have been forcibly displaced in Darfur since the beginning of this year as a result of inter-tribal fighting and conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and armed rebel groups.

Since early April, at least 50,000 people, including Sudanese and Chadians – who lived as refugees in the conflict zone, have fled into Chad following tribal clashes in Central Darfur. The UNHCR is currently concerned that the number of refugees will increase as clashes continue in Central Darfur. It is already the largest influx of refugees from Sudan into Chad since 2005. According to the UN, Chad has received more than 300,000 Sudanese refugees in ten years.

Internally, a large number of people – as much as 200,000 according to local sources – have also been reportedly displaced to Nyala area in Southern Darfur. At present, people continue to arrive to camps in the Nyala area, notably to Alsalam camp where the living conditions of the refugees are dire. As of 31 March, there were an estimated 1.43 million IDPs in camps in Darfur according to OCHA. As violence is intensifying, more displacements are likely to occur in the coming weeks.

Clashes between the rebel group Sudan Liberation Movement led by Minni Minawi (SLM-MM) and SAF have been ongoing in different parts of Southern and Eastern Darfur since April. As reported by the Sudan Social Development Organisation (SUDO), conflict between the SAF and allied militias and SLA-MM in Onganja, South of Nyala, then Labado and Muhajria to the East and later in Donkey Darisa, have left hundreds of thousands of civilians without home and shelter. While fighting is ongoing, grave human rights infringements have also been reported. According to SUDO, heavy fighting between different tribal groups and SLA-MM led to new displacements in the Nyala area and to camps near Nyala on 8 May.

Separately, the Government forces are also facing attacks from the dissident faction of the SLM led by Abdul Wahid al-Nur in Northern Darfur. In the area, fighting has resulted in the displacement of all civilians north and northwest of Nyala. Some of those, who are living in Mershing and Manawashi, have also been displaced according to SUDO.

In different parts of Darfur, near the cities of Katila, Um Dukhun, Ed Elfirsan and Rihaid Albirdi, tribal fighting between the Salamat and Ta'isha, Gimir and Beni Halba, Meseryia and Salamat tribes is intensifying. Clashes between the Tarjam and Fur tribes have also been reported in Southern Darfur in early May.

In Central Darfur, near Um Dukhun, violence resumed between the Misseriya and Salamat tribes despite the signing of a ceasefire agreement, on 11 April. The fighting between the two tribes has further spread to Southern and Northern Darfur when members of the

Salamat tribe attacked the town of Rihaid Albirdi that is inhabited by members of the Taisha tribe, a traditional ally of the Misseriya tribe.

In Southern Darfur, disputes over land ownership and tribal fighting remain. On 26 April, conflict between the Gimir and Beni Halba tribes resumed after a relatively stable period since February.

## Blue Nile and South Kordofan States

On 27 April, the talks on a possible ceasefire between the rebel group SPLM-North (SPLM-N) and the Sudanese Government stalled over the issue of humanitarian access corridors. An agreement on this particular issue had in fact already been reached last year by the two parties, but it has never been implemented. According to SPLM-N, the adjournment of the negotiations until next month is linked to the fact that Khartoum insists at linking the humanitarian issue to the political one – a condition that the rebel group strongly rejects. Humanitarian access to the area remains very limited. Although the negotiations are not officially broken off, the fighting in South Kordofan is intensifying.

On 15 May, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) continued bombing the town of Abu Karshola killing 25 civilians according to a local source. Ten days prior, retaliating against SPLM-N military operations, the SAF had already bombed a village northeast of Abu Karshola, which had passed under rebel control, killing 16 civilians and wounding 5 more. On 27 April, an SPLM-N armed group, supported by armed groups from the Sudan Revolutionary Front, attacked and seized the Abu Karshola village town in the area of Rashad in Southern Kordofan State. In the aftermath, the armed group managed to briefly besiege and loot the town of Umm Ruwaba, a strategic stronghold linking Southern Kordofan State to Northern Kordofan State, killing three civilians and nine police officers in the process.

The unprecedented bold attack on Umm Ruwaba also triggered regional resonance, leading Khartoum to overtly accuse Juba of supporting the rebels. On 17 May, Sudan's foreign minister stated that he received Juba's promise that South Sudan will not let the rebels operate along the shared border.

In early April, several clashes between the SPLM-N and the Government forces had already been reported in the area despite the preparations for the talks. On 16 April, the SPLM-N had allegedly managed to seize a military garrison, located at Ghandur next to the South Kordofan capital Kadugli.

According to various reports, the recent fighting around Abu Karshola and Ruwaba has displaced an estimated 45,000 people.

As of 30 April, OCHA reported that, overall, an estimated 231,000 people in South Kordofan and 95,000 people in Blue Nile are displaced or severely affected by conflict in government-controlled areas. In SPLM-N areas, some 700,000 people in South Kordofan and 90,000 in Blue Nile are displaced or severely affected by conflict according to local estimates. The UN also reports that it has no presence in SPLM-N controlled areas and has thus been unable to independently verify these figures.

According to UNHCR, an estimated 300 Sudanese refugees from South Kordofan cross the border to South Sudan daily.

On 4 April, the UN WFP reported a breakthrough as it managed to deliver food aid to the Blue Nile State for the first time since conflict began there 18 months ago. According to reports, the malnutrition rates among children under five in the region are 30 %, double the emergency threshold. According to FEWSNET, the majority of IDPs are likely to face crisis levels of food security by the time the rainy season starts in the next few weeks. Access to the rebel-held areas remains extremely challenging.

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## **ANGOLA FOOD INSECURITY**

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At the beginning of November 2012, OCHA reported that more than 1.8 million people in Angola are in a food security crisis, caused by prolonged drought. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture reported a 60% decrease of average rainfall during the planting season which resulted in a 30% drop in crop production. Ten coastal and central highland provinces have been affected. In some areas, families are sharing limited water sources with livestock, leading to contamination of these sources.

The risk of outbreak of water related diseases is heightened. There have been media reports of a cholera outbreak in the south, but these have been refuted by WHO.

In addition, an estimated 533,000 children suffer from varying levels of malnutrition in a country that is still recovering from decades of civil war that lasted until 2002. . On 9 May, Angola set up an emergency plan in for the southern province of Cunene, where an estimated 300,000 people are at risk of malnutrition because of the prolonged drought.

Some 75 people have died of malaria in eastern Lunda Sul province in the first quarter of 2013, and more than 15,000 cases have been registered, according to Angolan official sources. On 8 May, floods in the Angolan capital have killed at least 9 people.

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## **DJIBOUTI FOOD INSECURITY**

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Several consecutive years of drought have led to a critical food security situation in Djibouti. Currently, some 70,000 vulnerable people are at Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity. The northwest, southwest and south-eastern Pastoral Border livelihood zones are the worst affected. Rainfall levels in coastal areas as at the end of the Heys-Dadaa rainy season (October through March) were 50% to 75% below-normal. The rural areas near Obock town in the northeast, situated in the Central Pastoral Lowland livelihood zone, are experiencing severe water shortages and critical malnutrition levels. In the southeast, water access is expected to become increasingly limited, particularly in the areas of Sankal and Kabah-Kabah. With the usual lean season starting in May, households in south-eastern pastoral border areas will continue to face Crisis food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) through June, according to FEWSNet. According to the April WFP report, food insecurity in Djibouti has increased since November 2012 while households' own food production has decreased from 14.6% to 5.1% due principally to delayed rainfall and persisting cold.

Conditions for urban poor households are expected to remain critical during the coming months due to on-going increases in food prices. High unemployment rates (48%) and high staple prices are causing urban to peri-urban migration to areas such as Balbala. Wholesale prices of wheat flour, which had been stable at low levels since the beginning of 2012, increased from November to December 2012 by 17%. However, prices are still about 25% below the high levels recorded in 2011. Prices of rice (Belem), mainly consumed in urban areas, were stable during the second semester of 2012. These prices depend heavily on the availability of food aid on markets of the interior regions.

Successive years of poor rains have also eroded the coping mechanisms of pastoralists in Djibouti's rural regions as high food prices and unemployment rates afflict the country's urban areas.

The continued influx of refugees from Somalia is leading to an increase in humanitarian needs in both rural and urban areas. As of 17 April, there are some 18,725 Somali refugees in all areas of Djibouti.

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## **ETHIOPIA FOOD INSECURITY**

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As stated by OCHA on 9 May, floods have affected an estimated 50,000 people across the country since April. The Oromia and the Somali regions were the most severely hit. Nevertheless, the arrival of the seasonal rainfall allowed for an improvement of water and pasture availability in most drought-prone areas around the country. Water sources were fully replenished in Somali region and in all woredas of Oromia region, with the exception of Shalla and Siraro in West Arsi zone. Several localized areas across the country continue however to report critical water shortages, notably some woredas in Afar, Tigray and Amhara regions. In the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, rains were reportedly not sufficient to replenish ground water sources, although they improved the availability of surface water sources.

Previously, recent reports indicated that East and West Hararghe zones in eastern Ethiopia have deteriorated into food insecurity Crisis (IPC Phase 3) following two consecutive, poorly-distributed rainy seasons and a below average Meher harvest in October-November 2012. According to FEWSNET, food security outcomes are unlikely to significantly improve until June 2013 when consumption of green Belg crops begins. In the sweet potato-producing areas of Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), the sweet potato harvest is already below normal. Sweet potatoes are an important bridge crop from March to June. Households without sweet potatoes will be facing food consumption gaps during the April to June lean season because of late Belg planting, keeping these areas in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through June.

According to OCHA, the delayed Belg (mid-February to May) rains in most belg-receiving parts of the country, including SNNPR, north eastern Amhara, eastern and southern Tigray and central and eastern Oromia Regions, have thus led to late planting of Belg crops. According to FEWSNET, poor households in affected areas will not be able to meet their food needs through the next harvest without depleting their livelihoods asset. Most households have already turned to the market to access food (as early as January), as

their food stock from the 2012 Belg and meher harvest is already exhausted.

The Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD) released on February 28, stated that about 2.5 million people are food insecure and need humanitarian assistance until June. However, estimates of the number of people affected by food insecurity in 2013 vary between 3.5 and 2.4 million people. Households requiring assistance are concentrated in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions. Poor rains in pastoral areas mean that pasture availability will remain lower than usual and water sources will not fully refill, leading most pastoral areas to be classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from April to June. Following two consecutive, poorly distributed rainy seasons and a well below average Meher harvest in October/November 2012, the East and West Hararghe Zones have deteriorated into Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Increasing water shortages are reported across the country. In Somali, immediate water trucking needs were identified. Some 720,500 people required water trucking as of 11 March.

The number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia as of late April stood at 239,000 according to UNHCR. Overall, Ethiopia is hosting over 394,000 refugees. Apart from Somalia, refugees primarily originate from Eritrea and Sudan. The rate of refugee arrivals slowed down in March with only 1,987 new refugees registered compared to 4,726 in February and 3,654 in January according to OCHA. New arrivals are expected to place additional pressure on the already limited refugee food pipeline.

UNHCR is preparing to relocate thousands of South Sudanese refugees currently settled in the border Wanthowa district to the existing Pugnido camp in Ethiopia's Gambella region. Although 16,000 South Sudanese are estimated to currently reside at the border with host communities, their exact figures are unknown since refugees in the area remain unregistered.

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## **GAMBIA FOOD INSECURITY**

Despite good agricultural production in 2012 and good conditions for pastoralists, the situation in the Sahel remains critical, mostly due to the impact of the preceding crises such as food insecurity, floods and the Mali conflict. The Gambia continues to be affected by the Sahel food crisis after crop failure resulting from poor rains. In mid-May, WFP reported that local food production was recovering, but remained below potential due to overabundant rains, scarcity of seeds and inaccessibility of fertilizer.

According to WFP, as of early-May, almost 105,000 people are affected in The Gambia by moderate or severe food insecurity, accounting for 6% of the population of the country. The number has decreased from over 11% population estimated to be food insecure in early 2013. The proportion of food insecure is generally higher in main urban areas of Banjul, Kanifing and Brikama, about 13% of people suffer from moderate or severe food insecurity in urban hot-spots, i.e. vulnerable urban dwellings characterized by high poverty rates and constant exposure to environmental shocks, as reported by WFP.

As of September 2012, the level of global acute malnutrition in The Gambia recorded 9.9%, almost reaching the WHO classified "serious" threshold. In early May, WFP also reported that humanitarian needs remained for some 40,000 people affected subsequently by 2011

drought and 2012 floods in rural and vulnerable urban areas.

In November 2012, The Gambia declared an outbreak of the contagious bovine pleuropneumonia threatening livestock in the country and neighbouring countries. So far, due to lack of resources and institutional capacity to contain it, the livestock disease already caused the death of estimated 4,000 animals as reported by WFP. A national cattle vaccination campaign is underway and ought to be completed by late May.

There is a lack of data to exactly assess the situation with food supply in the Gambia.

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## **KENYA FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT, INSECURITY**

Since March, several parts of the country were affected by floods following heavy downpours countrywide. The coastal and Western Kenya regions were the most affected, where a combination of heavy rains and inadequate flood mitigation measures have destroyed homes, infrastructure and educational facilities. The Kenya Red Cross Society reported that as of 10 May, some 100,980 people have been affected cumulatively since the onset of the rains in March. To date, 93 deaths have been reported. Some 5,000 have been displaced because of the floods in West Pokot County over last week according to local media.

In Western province, next to the cities of Bungoma and Busia, unrest and indiscriminate attacks by various armed groups have resulted in 10 people killed and 100 injured. As of 10 May, tensions remain high in the region according to local media. According to the Kenya Red Cross, tribal clashes in the cities of Rhamu and Manderu in North Eastern province resulted in at least 2 people killed and a yet unknown number of displaced.

The food insecure population declined to 1.1 million in February 2013 from 2.1 million in August 2012 according to the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) 2013 short rains assessment. This was attributed to near average short rains crop production and improved grazing conditions compared to the 2012 August to September lean season.

However, there is a remaining risk that the number of food insecure could increase from the current level due to the poor performance of the October-to-December Short Rains in parts of the south-eastern and coastal marginal mixed farming zones.

The influx of Somali refugees into Kenya continues, with 549 new arrivals since the beginning of January as of 17 May. According to the UNHCR, the total number of Somali refugees in the country amounts to 492,046. A large part of these –425,000 – reside in Dadaab camps and have limited access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, water and sanitation. Moreover, since the beginning of December, heavy rains have caused floods in the camps. According to the UNHCR, eleven epidemic outbreaks were reported in 2012. The situation is expected to deteriorate due to an influx of new arrivals following the Government's decision to transfer Somali refugees from urban areas to camps around Dadaab.

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## LESOTHO FOOD INSECURITY

Lesotho's food security deteriorated significantly for the second year in a row. As a result of the impact of consecutive droughts and late rains in the cropping season 2011-12, around 725,500 people are food insecure (40% of the population) in Lesotho as of the beginning of March 2013. Last year, the agricultural production dropped 70%, resulting in Lesotho's worst harvest in ten years. This situation is compounded by maize prices increasing by 60% since the beginning of the year. On 9 August 2012, the Government declared a food crisis situation and called on development partners to assist.

The 2012-13 harvest is also likely to be below average, though better than last year. In early January 2013, the area planted was 40% below the five-year average. Poor rainfall performance in December delayed planting. Other reasons that have negatively impacted on production include the late start of the season, the early frost in the mountains, a mid-season dry spell and severe armyworm infestations that have affected 25% of the estimated cropped area. Many poor households experienced Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security levels until the delayed green harvest starts in April. According to FEWSNET, Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes are projected during the April to June period because many households are expected to harvest enough food to take them through the first three months of the 2013-14 consumption period, and some poor households plagued by food insecurity will be receiving humanitarian assistance during this period.

Lesotho's population is extremely vulnerable – the country has the world's third highest prevalence of HIV (23.5%) and 39% of children <5 are stunted. Lesotho suffers from widespread poverty with the proportion of households living below the poverty line exceeding 55%, out of which about 40% are extremely poor.

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## MALAWI FOOD INSECURITY

An estimated 2 million people are classified as food insecure in Malawi, marking a significant increase since June 2012. Some areas have experienced four consecutive poor harvests, indicating a deteriorating situation. As many as 15 out of 28 districts are affected by the food crisis, with the southern (Mulanje and Chikwawa Districts) and central parts (Balaka District) of the country being the most severely affected. Even before the current crisis, 40% of the population was living below the poverty line.

The situation is compounded by the devaluation of the local currency and the increasing price of maize, the staple food, which already far exceeds the purchasing power of most rural households. In March, the average national retail price for maize was 253% higher than the average retail price in the corresponding period during 2012. However, the inflation rate declined for the first time in March for almost two years. The decrease reflects better availability and lower prices of some food items such as sorghum, millet and beans, with the start of the 2013 main season's harvest. Therefore, improvements in food security conditions are expected in the next few months, according to GIEWS.

OCHA reported that, as of 15 February, flooding in southern Malawi had displaced some

33,000 people. In total, 86,000 people have been affected by flooding and storms since the onset of the rainy season. The hardest-hit areas are Mangochi, Phalombe and Nsanje districts, all in the south of the country and in the same region that was previously suffering from rain shortages and drought.

In addition, according to the International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA), armyworm outbreaks infesting maize crops and pasture have been reported in Ntcheu, Dedza, Kasungu and Mchinji districts of Kasungu and in Rumphu district of Muzuzu. This could further affect maize prices and availability.

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## SENEGAL FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

Nationwide, an estimated 739,000 people (6% of the population) are affected by food insecurity, according to FAO. Results from a joint mission (Government/ ActionAid/ Senegalese Red Cross/ FAO/ WFP) carried out in late December 2012 showed critical levels of food insecurity in areas of Bakel (65%), Matam (64%), Medina Yoro Foula (63%) and Linguere (55%). Food insecurity is low in all areas of the regions of Fatick and Kaffrine where it is less than 15%, while it is moderate in the departments of Dagana and Podor. The results indicate that food insecurity currently affects more than 230,000 people in some villages and rural communities in St. Louis, Louga, Matam, Kolda and Sedhiou. According to UNICEF, in 2013, four out of fourteen regions are estimated to surpass the emergency threshold of 10% of Global Acute Malnutrition: Tambacounda, Kaffrine, Matam, and Saint Louis.

UNICEF has reported that the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) caseload for children under five more than doubled the expectations of 2012. For 2013, the SAM burden is estimated at 63,323 children under five, and the Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) is estimated at 255,675 cases.

Although the 2012 harvest was generally good, the agricultural production was affected by the floods in August and September 2012 in the Senegal River Valley and western regions of the country. As a result, it is likely that a food crisis in 2013 will persist among vulnerable families which have depleted their livelihoods and do not have the means to restore them.

According to WFP, as of 3 April, the prices of cereals remained high in Senegal, demonstrating, depending on the region and local speculation, up to a 30% increase when compared to the five-year average.

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## ZIMBABWE FOOD INSECURITY, UNREST

The food security situation in Zimbabwe has temporarily improved, after reaching a peak period during the lean season with an estimated 1.6 million people in need of food assistance in the period leading up to the April 2013 harvest, according to the UN. According to FEWSNET, food insecurity in most of the country is Minimal (IPC Phase 1)

because of the steady food imports and of the continued distribution of humanitarian assistance. This level is expected to persist as poor households start to consume green foods and harvests between April and June. Significant problems with food supplies remain, however, in the southern areas of the country, notably in the Matabeleland South and Masvingo Provinces, where dry spells have resulted in moisture deficits which have compromised crop yields, further diminishing harvest expectations in affected districts.

The acute food crisis in Zimbabwe up until April occurred after late and erratic rains, poor agricultural practices, limited access to agricultural inputs, and a reduction in planted area contributed to a 33% decrease in last year's harvest if compared to 2011. In the most affected areas, maize prices were reported to be between 12% and 47% higher compared to prices in maize surplus areas. In the remaining affected parts of the country, prices of cereal and flour are likely to remain high, making food accessibility difficult for poor households.

Ongoing drought in the southern part of the country has increased food security needs. Large numbers of labour-constrained individuals and decreased purchasing power have significantly contributed to the number of people who require seasonal targeted food assistance. A large percentage of vulnerable rural farmers depend on NGO and Government-subsidized agricultural inputs.

In Zimbabwe 3.7 million (29% of the population) people are chronically food insecure. Chronic and acute child malnutrition stands at 32% and 3%, respectively. Masvingo, Matabeleland North and South, and parts of Mashonaland, Midlands and Manicaland provinces are the worst affected areas.

The food security crisis is also aggravated by the high HIV-prevalence rate, which is 14% compared to 5% for the rest of the southern Africa region. In addition, some 200,000 malaria cases with 111 deaths were reported in the country from January to March. This represents almost the double of malaria cases reported over the same period in 2012 according to OCHA.

On 16 March, Zimbabweans voted on a new constitution, which would introduce presidential term limits, abolish presidential immunity after leaving office, bolster the power of the courts, strengthen parliament's powers and set elections to decide whether President Mugabe will remain in power. Almost 95% of Zimbabweans voted in favour of the new constitution. Zimbabwe is expected to hold elections, which will be funded by South Africa, by October of this year. On 9 May, Zimbabwe's lower house of Parliament approved the draft constitution, which is now expected to be adopted by the Senate and then signed into law by President Mugabe. In the meantime, the EU stated that it would be ready to help fund Zimbabwe's electoral process embedded into the new constitution.

Although the run-up to the referendum remained peaceful, the UN Special Rapporteurs on human rights have received an increasing number of reports about acts of intimidation and harassment, physical violence and arrests against civil society actors, mostly working on human rights issues. In April, reports also indicated that the police have been confiscating radios that pick up foreign stations to limit Zimbabweans' access to alternative information while the local state-run media generally support Mugabe.

In recent weeks, the police have also reportedly conducted a crackdown on NGOs and

human rights groups, raiding offices, confiscating files and arresting employees. Although President Mugabe has called for peaceful conduct during and after the referendum and national elections, violence continues to be reported across the country.

Heavy rains in January caused extensive flooding affecting some 8,490 people as of 15 February, according to OCHA. The worst affected provinces were Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Masvingo and Midlands. During the first week of April, an additional 900 people have been affected by heavy rains in the Midlands province.

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## **CAMEROON FOOD INSECURITY**

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According to the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and FAO – although official production estimates are not yet available as of mid-April – the countrywide cereal output in 2012 is tentatively put at average levels. However, some parts of the country, notably in the north, will still remain food insecure due to localized poor harvests.

Following the findings of a joint Government/FAO/WFP Food Security Assessment Mission visiting Northern Cameroon in January-February 2013, the 2012 cereal output in the North province was estimated to be 16% lower than the previous year, while in the Far North region, despite an increase in cereal production, localized production shortfalls occurred for the second consecutive year.

The Logone and Chari department (Far North region) has reportedly suffered in 2012 from the lingering effects of a severe cereal production shortfall caused by the drought conditions which prevailed in 2011. In addition, both Far North and North regions were struck by flooding in September 2012, which affected 60,000 individuals, causing damage to crops and population displacement.

According to GIEWS and FAO, the Food Security Assessment Mission also established that cereal stocks were already depleted as early as March 2013 in 21 districts out of a total of 47 in the Far North region, where 1.78 million people (about 46% of the region's total population) reside. Furthermore, based on preliminary data from the 2012 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, jointly carried out by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, in northern Cameroon the chronic malnutrition rates (44.8% in the Far North Region, 43.3% in the North region) exceed the "critical" threshold of 40% set by the World Health Organization. Similarly, the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates of 6.3% in the Far North and 5.5% in the North are higher than the "precarious" threshold of 5 percent.

In addition, as of 23 April, a total of 1,889 refugees from the Central African Republic crossed into the country, according to the UNHCR.

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## **MOZAMBIQUE FLOODS, EPIDEMIC**

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An outbreak of violence in mid-April suggests a worrying possibility that the country may

face sustained political violence before next year's elections. On 4 April, the Mozambique police raided the headquarters of the opposition Renamo party, arresting at least 12 people and fuelling tensions. The following day, opposition militiamen from the Renamo party carried out an attack on a provincial police station to try to free the people arrested during the raid on their headquarters, killing four policemen in the process. On 6 April, armed men attacked a bus and a truck in central Mozambique, near the opposition stronghold of Muxungue, killing three people in the process. Renamo denied being behind the assault that was the first such attack on a civilian vehicle in Mozambique in a decade. Following on, Mozambique's President Armando Guebuza stated that he would respond firmly to the deadly attacks against civilian vehicles blamed on armed members of the former rebel group Renamo. The latter opposition group has seats in the country's parliament, but is effectively excluded from power.

Despite flooding at the beginning of March this season's national crop production prospects are reported to be good, with substantial contributions expected from the central and northern regions and the food security of most rural households across the country and outside the flood affected areas is expected to be favourable through June. According to FEWSNET, the current food insecurity outcomes are Minimal (IPC Phase 1) for the majority of the rural households since food is more readily available through harvests and targeted food assistance in mid-April.

The floods in Mozambique displaced 186,238 people and cumulatively affected some 420,000 people as of late April, according to OCHA. An estimated 119 people died in the floods, including cases due to secondary causes such as electrocution. Thousands of households have been damaged; road infrastructure, electricity, and drainage systems have been interrupted. The southern Gaza Province was the worst hit with around 175,700 people affected and 172,600 temporarily displaced followed by Inhambane and Maputo provinces, and the central province of Zambezia where 33,956 people were affected and 10,522 temporarily displaced.

A cumulative total of 1,352 cholera cases and 5 deaths were reported between 28 January and 10 March, of which 482 cases and 2 deaths were reported in Nampula City, the most recently affected province. As of 21 February, 413 cases and two deaths were reported in Cabo Delgado Province, northern Mozambique.

An UN-led assessment of the agriculture sector at the end of March indicated that an estimated 267,000 ha of agricultural land were affected by floods of which approximately 211,000 ha with diverse cultures (maize, rice, beans and vegetables) were lost, representing about 4% of the total area sown in the country. The Gaza province was the worst affected with 30% of crop area lost, followed by Inhambane (9%) and Maputo (4%). It is estimated that some 128,000 producers were affected in the 10 provinces (39 districts), according to OCHA.

However, despite this, limited access to food due to 2011-12 production shortfalls of almost 19%, high food prices and the restricted movement of goods due to heavy rainfall and flooding has Stressed (IPC phase 2) the food security situation for households in areas including parts of Cahora Bassa, Mutarara, Macossa, Machanga districts in the central zone, and Chigubo, Chókwe and Funhalouro in the south.

Overall, the country suffers from high chronic food insecurity, affecting nine million people

(39% of the population).

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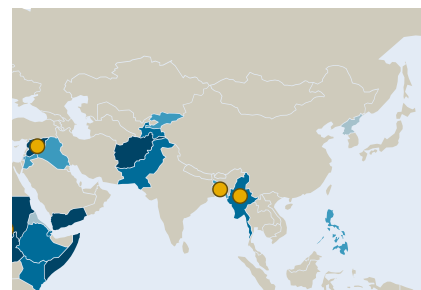
## ERITREA FOOD INSECURITY

On 21 January, dissident Eritrean soldiers with tanks laid siege to the Information Ministry and forced state media to call for the release of high-profile political prisoners and demanded the implementation of the constitution which was never enacted by Parliament. However, calm reportedly returned to the capital Asmara on 22 January. No further information is available on the events.

Between 5,000 and 10,000 political prisoners are being held in the country of about 6 million people. The United Nations Human Rights chief has accused Eritrea of torture and summary executions.

An estimated six million people in Eritrea are food insecure (98% of the population). Local food and fuel prices are likely to remain high, putting severe pressure on vulnerable groups' coping mechanisms. The Government of Eritrea officially denies any food shortages within its borders and refuses food aid. There is a lack of updated and reliable data on the humanitarian situation due to the limited humanitarian access and a ban on humanitarian organisations assessing needs. No confirmed data on the food security situation or food price levels is available. Therefore, Eritrea is not included within the Global Overview prioritisation.

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# ASIA

## AFGHANISTAN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

### Highlights

**April:** According to OCHA, floods have affected over 30,000 people across the country, with Balkh province being hit the hardest.

**As of 30 April,** the UNHCR reported that some 539,000 people are internally

displaced in Afghanistan.

**16 May:** In the first major attack on the capital in more than two months, a powerful car bomb targeted a convoy of foreign troops in Kabul and killed 15 people, including six foreigners.

**20 May:** A suicide bomber attack outside a government building in northern Afghanistan killed at least 14 people including a senior politician in Pul-e-Khumri, the capital of Baghlan province in northern Afghanistan.

Humanitarian access is reportedly increasingly compromised in Afghanistan. Over the last month, according to OCHA, 27 attacks against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities were recorded in 11 provinces across the country.

### **Political and Security Context:**

On 27 April, the Taliban vowed to start a new campaign of mass suicide attacks on foreign military and diplomatic targets and “insider attacks”. The following weeks proved to be among the bloodiest for international troops that are preparing to withdraw from Afghanistan. In parallel, attacks against government workers are also on the rise.

On 20 May, a suicide bomber attack outside a government building in northern Afghanistan killing at least 14 people including a senior politician in Pul-e-Khumri, the capital of Baghlan province in northern Afghanistan. On 16 May, in the first major attack on the capital in more than two months, a powerful car bomb targeted a convoy of foreign troops in Kabul. The attack killed at least 15 people, including six foreigners. The attack was claimed by Hezb-e-Islami, an autonomous insurgent group that is allied with the Taliban. Earlier this week, at least 7 foreign soldiers were killed in various incidents in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. On 12 May, 10 civilians had already been killed in a bomb attack in the Arghistan district in Kandahar province.

Meanwhile, military operations have been ongoing in Afghanistan while the so-called “fighting season” has resumed with the arrival of spring. In April, an escalation of violence was recorded in Faryab province where heavy fighting between government forces and insurgents has been recorded. The fighting largely focused on Qaisar district, but also affected Amar, Pashtun Kot, Dawlatabad and Qaramqol districts. Over the past month, heavy military operations have also been reported in Badakhshan province and in Maidan Wardak province.

On 21 April, Taliban fighters seized a group of 10 foreigners and one Afghan who were on board a helicopter in Logar province in eastern Afghanistan. On 14 May, as stated by the Turkish Prime Minister, Taliban has freed all of the 8 Turk nationals captured in April. According to a Taliban spokesperson, the fate of the two remaining foreign pilots – a Russian and a Kyrgyz – has not been decided yet.

On 1 May, tensions escalated between Kabul and Karachi alongside Afghanistan’s contested eastern border in Nangarhar province, where a fire exchange resulted in the

death of one Afghan border policeman and in two Pakistani soldiers being wounded. On 6 May, new clashes erupted in the area. At the same time, 3,000 persons gathered to support the Afghan security forces against the Pakistani troops in Kabul.

Although 85,000 international troops are currently supporting the Government in its fight against the Taliban, most of them are scheduled to withdraw by the end of 2014 and over 75% of the country is expected to be under national security control by July 2013.

### **Humanitarian Context and Needs:**

**Displacement:** Heavy fighting in Faryab district led to displacements probably numbering in thousands in April. In parallel, an additional 4,500 people have been reportedly displaced in Maidan Wardak Province over the past month.

Overall, 5.4 million people are affected by the on-going conflict and the UNHCR reports that some 539,000 people are internally displaced in Afghanistan as of 30 April. Nearly 2.9 million registered Afghan refugees remain in exile in Pakistan and Iran. There are an estimated additional 2.4 million Afghan refugees undocumented refugees in the two countries.

**Disaster:** A powerful 5.6 magnitude earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan, near the Pakistani border on 24 April. According to local reports, 15 people were killed and 84 others injured while the earthquake also damaged over 3,000 houses. Meanwhile, according to OCHA, floods have affected over 30,000 people across the country with Balkh province being hit the hardest.

**Access:** Humanitarian access has been increasingly compromised in Afghanistan over the past weeks. Ongoing military operations in several provinces are hampering the delivery of humanitarian aid, notably in Faryab and Badakhshan provinces.

Local sources quoted by OCHA also registered an increase of 62% in attacks on aid workers, excluding UN staff, during the first three months of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. As reported by OCHA, April further recorded a spike in access-related incidents mainly in the East, South and North of the country. Over last month, 27 attacks against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities were recorded in 11 provinces across the country.

**Food Security and Malnutrition:** According to FAO, more than nine million people (34% of the total population) are food insecure in Afghanistan, of whom 2.1 million people are severely food insecure. Although most households entered the lean season more food secure than last year, those in northern Badakhshan and the Wakhan corridor are currently in Stressed food security conditions (IPC Phase 2). As reported by the WFP, the prices of wheat flour and low quality rice continued to increase in March, being respectively 35% and 47% higher in comparison to the same month last year and 32% and 50% higher if compared to the same month average over the last 5 years.

Households in the extreme northeast, central highlands and low-income households across the country remain vulnerable to food insecurity due to inflation, loss of livestock and reduced remittances from Iran. Some 18% of children <5 nationwide suffer from malnutrition, while acute malnutrition rates in the south are as high as 29.5% for children



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## SYRIA CIVIL WAR

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The Syrian military continued its offensive on opposition controlled Qusayr, a strategic city in Homs province connecting the capital to the Mediterranean coast. Hezbollah militants support the Syrian army in its push to take control of the city. In addition, fighting continues in all of the 14 governorates, apart from Tartous and As-Sweida.

In his latest television appearance on 19 May, President al-Assad insisted he would not resign before elections in 2014. In addition, he re-iterated that no chemical weapons had been used against the civilian population. The UN team assigned to investigate the use of chemical weapons has not yet been allowed entry to the country. Pressure for action on Syria has mounted with UK and US intelligence reports stating that the regime has used these weapons on at least two occasions. On 15 May, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the Syrian Government for human rights violations and calling for a transitional Government. Russia and the US have agreed to convene a peace conference in Geneva, which aims to bring together members of the regime and the opposition forces.

The UN estimates that over 6.8 million people are in need of humanitarian aid as a result of the heavy fighting and subsequent lack of access to livelihoods and services. Currently, an estimated 4.25 million people are internally displaced, of which 1.25 million are concentrated in Aleppo and 705,200 in rural Damascus. In addition, UNRWA estimates that approximately 235,000 Palestine refugees have been displaced inside Syria. Humanitarian aid groups warned this week that the health care system has become a deliberate target in the civil war while an estimated 30,000 doctors have fled the country. At the same time, a recent rapid assessment among 235 children indicated that the nutritional status of children is deteriorating.

The conflict increasingly affects neighbouring countries. Shelling continues in the border region of Lebanon and sectarian tensions have re-ignited in Tripoli, with two days of fighting between residents in the city on 18 and 19 May. Two improvised explosive devices were detonated in the centre of the border town of Reyhanli on 11 May, killing at least 46 people. Following the explosions there were reports of attacks on Syrian refugees. Gunfire from Syria hit the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights at the start of the week. Between 4 and 6 May Israel launched several airstrikes on military targets in Syria.

In addition, the number of Syrians registered or awaiting registration in host countries has surpassed the 1.5 million, with over 476,000 Syrians registered or awaiting registration in Lebanon (Government estimates 1 million Syrians in total, including a large number of Syrian migrants), over 474,000 in Jordan (Government estimates 513,000 Syrians in total), over 350,000 in Turkey (Government estimates 400,000), over 148,000 in Iraq and more than 78,000 in Egypt and other countries in North Africa.

The needs across the country continue to far outweigh the support provided. The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, recently urged the UN Security Council to

grant aid agencies cross-border access to Syria without permission from the Syrian Government. Accessibility into and around Damascus is becoming increasingly difficult and reaching certain areas of Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Aleppo and Idlib remains particularly challenging. In the past few weeks, several UN agencies have separately warned that their resources are running low, and added that without additional funds they will be forced to scale back relief efforts across the region. Two UN response plans, one requesting funding for Syria and one for host countries, are expected to be launched at the start of June.

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## YEMEN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY

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Yemen remains a strategic spot for the U.S. and its Gulf allies who need to contain threats from al-Qaeda affiliated militants and separatist tribes to Saudi Arabia and to nearby sea lanes where oil tankers pass. Across the country, violence and insecurity continues with inter-tribal fighting in the north, fighting between the Government and armed groups in the southern governorates and civil unrest in urban centres of the west and central governorates.

Between 18 and 20 May, at least 6 suspected al-Qaeda militants were killed following two drone strikes, one south of the capital Sana'a and one in the southern Abyan governorate. Although no report indicated who was behind the strikes, previous drone attacks have been carried out by the U.S. Since the beginning of the year, several such attacks have been carried out in Yemen. On 17 April, 4 al-Qaeda militants were already killed in a U.S. drone strike south of the capital Sana'a.

On 8 May, an ambush set up by alleged al-Qaeda militants resulted in the death of three Yemeni military in the southern Lahej province. The following day another military officer was killed in the same area.

On 6 May, tribal fighting between the Bani Al-Harith and the Bani Hushaish broke up in the northern area of Sana'a with no information on casualties or on the source of the dispute. On 8 April, seven people were killed in clashes between army deserters and tribesmen. In a separate incident, two Yemeni Government soldiers were killed and two others injured in fighting with tribesmen who had blown up the main Maarib oil pipeline in south Yemen only two weeks after it was repaired, according to reports from Government sources. On 6 April clashes between the army and southern separatists in the town of al-Hawat, in Lahej province, resulted in one Yemeni soldier killed and four people wounded after separatists tried to close the marketplace.

Meanwhile, national Dialogue sessions started on 18 March, after numerous delays since November 2012, in order to start drafting a new Yemeni constitution, agree on other reforms, and pave the way for elections. The constitution is expected to set out the groundwork for presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2014. In February and March, violence related to the Yemen's troubled national dialogue had already erupted in Sana'a and in the Aden governorate, notably in the latter's Mansura district – a stronghold of the pro-independence movement.

An estimated 13 million people (55% of the population) are in need of humanitarian

assistance in Yemen, according to OCHA. As a result of widespread conflict, an estimated 340,000 people remain internally displaced in the north of the country, including Sana'a, as of May. In the meantime, in the south, over 180,000 internally displaced people have returned to their areas of origin in Abyan governorate so far and further returns are ongoing, according to UNHCR.

As of April, Yemen hosts more than 242,000 refugees, virtually all of Somali and Ethiopian origin, according to UNHCR. The number increased significantly during 2012, which saw record high levels of new arrivals, amounting to 107,500 people in 2012. As reported by UNHCR, an estimated 30,000 people have crossed into Yemen from the Horn of Africa between January and April.

Approximately 10.5 million people in Yemen are food insecure, according to OCHA. 970,000 people suffer from Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM). The emergency threshold for GAM >15% is exceeded in six Governorates: Hajjah, Al-Jawf, Al Hudaydah, Taiz, Aden and Lahj. The situation is serious (GAM 10-14%) in six other Governorates (Raymah, Ibb, Abyan, Amran, Al-Mahwit, and Al Dhale'e). UNHCR sources state that 998,000 children <5 are acutely malnourished in the country. The causes of food insecurity will likely persist and be aggravated by poor prospects for the local agricultural production, estimated to be roughly 8% lower than in 2012.

A collapse of public services following the civil unrest in 2011 has severely disrupted access to health services, clean water and basic sanitation. As reported by the UN, an estimated 6 million people do not have access to healthcare across the country in May. In Yemen, epidemics are again re-occurring, with 170 children having died from measles in 2012.

Information about humanitarian needs throughout the country remains difficult to ascertain due to insecurity. Humanitarian access in Yemen is hampered by insecurity across the country. Kidnappings and attacks against humanitarian actors persist. On 13 May, armed groups have thus kidnapped three staff members of ICRC groups in the southern Abyan governorate. All of the captured staff was released three days later.

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## **MYANMAR INTERNAL UNREST, FLOODS**

On 14-15 May, Myanmar has been affected by the tropical cyclone Mahasen even if the latter had considerably weakened over the past week and become a tropical storm as it made landfall. Although damages and casualties proved to be important, the country was nevertheless largely relieved that the results of the passing of Mahasen were not much worse. According to reports, the impact of the storm on Myanmar has been limited. However, some 50 Muslim Rohingya were killed after their boat capsized as they tried to flee the storm from Myanmar to Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, where the storm landed, at least 17 people were killed.

The 140,000 displaced – largely Rohingya Muslims – living in dire conditions along the coast in Rakhine State following last year's violence were spared the full force of the cyclone. The populations that were relocated in days prior to the catastrophe are now returning to the camps.

However, the displaced people living in flood-prone camps remain heavily at risk of flooding during the monsoon season from May to September. According to UNHCR, IDPs settlements in Sittwe, Myebon and Pauktaw are particularly at risk.

Meanwhile, sectarian and ethnic strife continue to plague Myanmar. On 30 April, a violent incident between Muslim and Buddhist communities occurred when a crowd attacked a Mosque and shops in the small town of Oakkan, 100 km north of the commercial capital Yangon. In the aftermath, unrest spread to nearby villages and the police. As a result of the clashes, one person was killed and 10 more injured.

On 20 March, three days of violent riots and clashes between Muslims and Buddhists had already erupted in the town of Meikhtile in central Myanmar. As a result, an estimated 12,846 people were displaced, according to a rapid interagency assessment. 10,834 people still remain displaced in 11 locations as of April. According to the Government, the death toll stood at 43 people with 61 more being injured. The authorities declared a state of emergency and deployed military to the riot-hit town on March 22, and calm was reportedly restored on 23 March.

According to Government officials, the violence had also spread to other townships in the region by the end of March, in particular to the Yamethin Township where 40 houses and the mosque were destroyed. Sporadic acts of arson also spread from Meikhtila to Okpho and Gyobingauk in Bago Region and minor disturbances were reported in Yangon. According to the UN, attacks on religious buildings and shops in the townships of Nattalin, Thegon, and Zigon were reported on 27-29 March.

The last confrontation between Buddhists and Muslims marks the deadliest inter-communal unrest since the violence between the ethnic Rakhine Buddhists and Muslim Rohingya shook western Rakhine state last year, killing hundreds of people and displacing over 100,000 people. As of late December, between 115,000-138,000 people were still displaced, mostly across eight Rakhine townships (Kyaukpyu, Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Pauktaw, Ramree and Rathedaung).

A second round of peace negotiations between Myanmar's Government and the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and its armed wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), started on Monday 11 March in Ruili, China. On 12 March, the Government of Myanmar and Kachin rebels opened discussions on establishing a new frontline between their armies. Kachin leaders rejected calls from the Government for an immediate ceasefire during the negotiations saying they needed more assurances from the Government. Although the next round of talks between the KIO and the Myanmar Government was planned for mid-April, several attempts to set an official date have failed. According to the latest information, the two parties may now try to meet by mid-May.

Fighting between the Government and KIA re-ignited in June 2011, when a 17-year ceasefire with the KIA rebels broke down. KIA is seeking greater autonomy for the one million Kachin people residing in Myanmar. As a result of the fighting, an estimated 100,000 people have been displaced. Around 20,000 residents and 15,000 displaced people are thought to be in Laiza. According to the UN, nearly 2,000 people were newly displaced from Northern Shan State, as a result of the latest fighting.

Access has improved as major highways in Kachin state – closed since the outbreak of hostilities between the Government army and KIA in 2011 – were reopened on 17 March, following the renewal of talks between the two sides. However, access to the affected population in Rakhine state remains difficult as campaigns have taken place based on claims of favouritism by international aid agencies towards the non-Rakhine Muslim minorities. According to OCHA, as of mid-April, access to IDPs is still seriously hampered by ongoing intimidation of aid workers.

The rice harvest in 2013 is expected to be significantly affected by the heavy flooding that occurred at the beginning of September 2012 as the rains inundated around 250,000 hectares of crops. In addition, according to WFP, rainfall deficiencies in the early and late monsoon seasons have impacted key crop harvests and resulted in water shortages in various parts of the Dry Zone in central Myanmar. The food security situation in the area is already of serious concern and will further deteriorate as the summer progresses.

On 3 May, heavy rains hit southern Shan State in eastern Myanmar killing at least 11 people and flooding some 170 buildings according to the country's Red Cross.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES COMPLEX**

According to OCHA, some 1.8 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in the Palestinian territories, with protection of the civilian population, improvement of food insecurity, provision of access to basic services, and prevention of forced displacement as highest priorities.

As reported by OCHA, after the killing of an Israeli settler by a Palestinian on 30 April, a wave of violence erupted, resulting in the injury of 43 Palestinians and 8 settlers in the West Bank. In a separate incident on 30 April, the Israeli air forces targeted and killed a Palestinian member of an armed group in Gaza city. It was the first attack of such kind since the announcement of the ceasefire in November 2012. Over last week, several rockets and mortars were also fired by Palestinian armed groups resulting in no injuries or damage.

On 9 April, UNRWA reopened their relief and distribution centres in Gaza, which provide food to around 25,000 people a day. The centres were closed on 4 April, after demonstrators stormed one of its compounds in an allegedly pre-planned action. The incident was a further escalation in a series of demonstrations and protests that have occurred since the end of March.

On 29 November 2012, the General Assembly voted to grant Palestine a non-member observer State status at the United Nations, while expressing the urgent need for the resumption of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians moving towards a permanent two-State solution. Direct negotiations between the two sides have been on hold since September 2010, with the Palestinians insisting on a settlement freeze before returning to the negotiating table and the Israelis insisting on no preconditions.

*Updated: 13/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **PAKISTAN CONFLICT, FLOODS**

On 11 May, Pakistan held its much-anticipated parliamentary elections amidst terrorist attacks by the Pakistani Taliban who had announced in advance their intention to undermine the polls. As the high turnout elections allowed for the victory of the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N), its leader, Nawaz Sharif, is likely to become Prime minister. Sharif's likely accession to power will mark the first transition between civilian governments in a country that has long been ruled by the military. In the 1990's, Nawaz Sharif had already served twice as Pakistan's Prime Minister before being ousted by a military coup that brought General Pervez Musharraf to power in 1999. The latter, which returned from exile last month and briefly managed to register as a candidate for the upcoming elections, was eventually barred from running for the national assembly and placed under house arrest by the authorities. Officially, Musharraf was prevented from participating in the elections because of court cases pending against him according to a local source.

Although the victory of the PML-N is likely to remain uncontested, results from a few constituencies across the country still remain uncertain amidst accusations of frauds. Re-polling has also been conducted in a few others where security issues prevented voting. One week after the elections, tensions however remain high in Pakistan while a senior female politician from the Tehreek-e-Insaf party was shot dead in Karachi on 19 May. Some observers expect protests in the capital in the coming days. On 17 May, twin bomb attacks killed at least 8 people outside two mosques in the Malakand region in northwest Pakistan. On 12 May, a suicide bomb blast killed 8 and wounded some 90 others in Quetta, capital of Balochistan province

The election week-end was also tarnished by numerous terrorist attacks while an estimated 150 people had been killed in the run-up to elections. On Election Day, a bomb attack against the office of the Awami National Party (ANP) killed some 11 people and wounded 40 others in Karachi while another ANP office was blown in the northwest. 11 people were also killed in three separate attacks in the insecure Baluchistan province. The bombings, mostly claimed by Taliban affiliated forces, have largely targeted politicians. The incidents in the weeks preceding the polls have largely attested the rising threat posed by sectarian strife to secular candidates running in the elections even if some attacks have also struck at elections rallies of religious parties.

On 10 May, 4 people were killed and another 20 injured in two separate attacks occurring in Pakistan's tribal western provinces. On 6 May, a suicide bomber killed 25 people and wounded 65 others at an election rally of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party in Peshawar in northwestern Pakistan. Over the previous weeks, terrorist attacks had already intensified while the Taliban attempted to obstruct the polls. On 2 May, bombers blew up two schools designated as polling stations in the southwestern province of Baluchistan. Three days earlier, a suicide bomber attack targeting a senior official in the city administration killed at least 8 people and injured 45 others in Peshawar. On 23 April, a suicide attack in Quetta targeting a prominent leader of Pakistan's ethnic Hazara minority killed six people, but left the politician unharmed. On 16 April, at least 9 people were killed and 50 others wounded when a suicide bomber attacked an election rally of the ANP in Peshawar. In a separate incident on the same day, a roadside bomb struck an election convoy of the PML-N and killed four people in southwestern Baluchistan province.

Meanwhile, government operations against non-state armed groups, as well as sectarian violence, have caused significant population movement in Pakistan since July 2008. According to OCHA, as of mid-April, an estimated 992,562 people remain displaced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) due to protracted conflict. Since mid-March, intensifying Government military operations against the Taliban and clashes between militants groups in the Tirah Valley in Khyber Agency (FATA) have led to additional massive population movements. As of early May, UNHCR reported an estimated 80,000 people displaced from Khyber Agency to safer grounds in Peshawar, Kohat, and towards the camps of New Durrani in Kurram Agency and Jalozai in Nowshera District. According to local officials, this number may rise to up to 120,000 people in the upcoming weeks due to the ongoing fighting in the area.

On 1 May, tensions escalated between Kabul and Karachi alongside Afghanistan's contested eastern border in Nangarhar province where a fire exchange resulted in the death of one Afghan border policeman and in two Pakistani soldiers being wounded. A second border incident between the two countries was reported on 6 May. While official sources within the Afghan military announced Kabul's intention to reinforce its military presence in the disputed areas, this last incident is likely to further unsettle the relations between the two neighbours.

A major 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southeast Iran, near the border with Pakistan, on 16 April. Tremors were felt as far away as India and the Gulf Arab states. The epicentre was in an area of mountains and desert, some 86 kilometres from the Iranian city of Khash and 78 kilometres from the border with Pakistan. In Pakistan, according to OCHA, at least 13 people were killed and 53 others injured, mostly in the town of Mashkeel in the southwestern province of Baluchistan that borders Iran. Overall, in Pakistan the earthquake affected an estimated 30,000 people while 2,200 houses were also damaged.

Flash floods triggered by heavy rains in September 2012 caused destruction across Pakistan. According to the Government, around 1.5 million people were still in need for critical services in Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh provinces as of late April according to OCHA. Many of the affected districts, particularly in Baluchistan and Sindh, were already struggling to recover from the 2010 and 2011 flooding. Areas still inundated may remain under water for several more months due to lack of drainage and slower evaporation during the winter months.

Malnutrition rates in some flood-affected districts were beyond emergency thresholds before the recurrent floods in 2012 and were predicted to worsen. In addition, 60% of the population in Pakistan is food insecure and inflation, with rising fuel prices and stagnating domestic productivity, is pushing up food prices. Seven districts are classified as facing IPC phases 3 (Crisis) and 4 (Emergency). In Pakistan, prices of wheat and wheat flour have been steadily increasing since June 2012 reaching record levels in most markets in February 2013, underpinned by higher producer support prices.

Measles cases in 2012 surged by almost five times compared to 2011, leading to the deaths of more than 485 children, up from 64 deaths in 2011. Some 175 deaths have been reported since the beginning of 2013 alone. Sindh province, the area hardest hit by the measles outbreak, is also most affected by the flash flooding occurring in September 2012. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 141 measles outbreaks throughout the

country since the beginning of the year. WHO has described the situation in Pakistan as alarming due to a steady increase in measles cases and deaths.

In the country, assessments and humanitarian operations are hampered by difficult access due to insecurity, standing floodwaters, and visa delays. Attacks against aid workers also continue to threaten the provision of life-saving assistance. According to OCHA in January alone, 20 aid workers were attacked, which is nearly 50% of last year's total figure of 42. More than 15 polio vaccinators were killed in targeted attacks in December and January.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **TAJIKISTAN FOOD INSECURITY**

Since the beginning of January 2013, over 3 million people (32% of the population) in Tajikistan are estimated by WFP to be at risk of food insecurity due to a prolonged lean season and depleted winter stocks. According to WFP, around 870,300 people in 12 livelihood zones are classified as being in Crisis food security conditions (IPC Phase 3). Another 2.4 million people are classified as being in Stressed conditions (IPC Phase 2). Overall however, the food security status of the analysed zones has relatively improved in the reporting months compared to the previous year thanks to increased remittances received, good rainfall and good cereal production reaching 1.2 million tons at the end of 2012, 12% higher than during the last season. Spring rainfall in March has been temporarily well distributed and it is expected to continue at its current regular pace.

In Tajikistan, which heavily depends on imports, the price of wheat flour prices remain at or close to historic highs in the main and regional markets of the country. In April, wheat flour prices decreased compared to March but still remained high at all big and regional markets of the country compared to the same period of last year. According to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan, cereal production is tentatively forecasted to increase by 6% in 2013 and prices are expected to slowly decrease.

During 2012, an increase in food prices was recorded on other staple food products such as potatoes (by 19 %), beef (by 15%), and bread. Transportation and fuel prices have contributed to the surge of food prices. However, when accounting for exchange rates, the current prices are not as high as the 2008 peak prices.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **BANGLADESH INTERNAL UNREST, CYCLONE**

### **Highlights**

**7 May:** While the religious protests spread outside of the capital, at least 20 people, including two policemen and a security guard, were killed in clashes. The protesters set fire to vehicles, including two police ones, and stormed a police outpost in the outskirts of the capital. Several hundred of people were reportedly injured.

**5-13 May:** The recurrent hartals or strikes called by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), the country's largest Islamic party, or BNP, Bangladesh's main opposition political party, caused

significant disruption to business and commerce and vast current losses to the economy.

**9 May:** A local tribunal convicted and sentenced to death an Islamist official of the JI party for atrocities in the country's war of independence, bringing a wave of violent protest from his supporters nationwide.

**12 May:** The authorities decided to arrest on this same day the leader of JI, who is now also charged for offenses committed during the 1971 war. As a result, most observers now fear a further escalation of the tensions in the country.

**12 May:** The latest official figures show that 1,100 people died in the collapse of the eight-story garment factory in Savar.

**16 May:** The main section of Cyclone Mahasen struck the southern coast of Bangladesh. The cyclone was weaker than expected and had been downgraded to tropical storm before reaching land. Nonetheless, initial assessments indicate that some coastal areas are seriously affected. According to the Bangladeshi Government, 17 people were killed and more than 457,000 people are affected in nine districts, with Chittagong, Bhola, Barguna, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, and Jhalokati being the worst affected.

### **Political and Security Context:**

Since January 2013, Bangladesh has seen recurrent *hartals* or strikes called by JI, the country's largest Islamic party, or Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Bangladesh's main opposition political party. The hartals have caused significant disruption to business and commerce and current losses to the economy are vast. The past week saw a decrease in violent protests activity compared to previous weeks.

On 9 May, a local tribunal convicted and sentenced to death an Islamist official of the JI party for atrocities in the country's war of independence, bringing a wave of violent protest from his supporters nationwide. While the party called for a day-long hartal on 12 May, the authorities decided to arrest on this same day its leader, who is now also charged for offenses committed during the 1971 war. As a result, most observers now fear a further escalation of the tensions in the country.

The last series of street clashes came after violence earlier erupted in the capital, Dhaka. On 5 May, some 200,000 Islamist protesters demanding religious reforms from the government took to the streets. The next day, while the protests spread outside of the capital, at least 20 people, including two policemen and a security guard, were killed in clashes. The protesters set fire to vehicles, including two police ones, and stormed a police outpost in the outskirts of the capital. Several hundred of people were reportedly injured. The protesters were largely trying to impose an Islamist agenda on Bangladesh by demanding an anti-blasphemy law with provision for the death penalty.

Initially, the wave of demonstrations started in January over the trial and sentencing of senior political leaders of the JI party including the party's leader and deputy leader over

their role in the 1971 independence war.

The turmoil comes as the authorities are still struggling to deal with the outrage over the collapsed garment factory on 24 April. The collapse of the eight-story garment factory in Savar, 25 kilometres northeast of the capital Dhaka, left some 1,100 people dead according to official reports as of 12 May. The collapse of the building sparked several widespread and violent protests in and around Dhaka.

### **Humanitarian Context and Needs:**

**Disaster:** The main section of Cyclone Mahasen struck the southern coast of Bangladesh on 16 May. The cyclone was weaker than expected and had been downgraded to tropical storm before reaching land. The storm weakened further immediately after it made landfall, and slowed down until dissipating on 17 May.

The full damage of the storm remains uncertain, but initial assessments indicate that the damage is at the medium scale. Nine districts in southern Bangladesh are affected, with Chittagong, Bhola, Barguna, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, and Jhalokati reporting the largest damages. According to the Bangladeshi Government, 17 people were killed and more than 457,000 people were affected in nine districts as of 20 May. No state of emergency has been declared.

Bangladesh is considered one of the world's most hazard-prone countries and is often subject to floods.

**Food Security and Malnutrition:** Some 40% of the population is food insecure and this is aggravated by rising food prices and disasters destroying infrastructure and inundating land.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

## **IRAQ DISPLACEMENT, INSECURITY**

### **Highlights**

**21 May:** Over 200 people have been killed in Iraq as a result of intersectorian strife last week, making it one of bloodiest since the beginning of the year.

**16 May:** The number of registered Syrian refugees in Iraq reached 148,028, with daily arrivals to Iraq of 700-750 people, according to UNHCR.

**14 May:** The first group of Kurdish militants from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) to leave Turkey under a new peace deal arrived into Iraq. The arrival of former PKK insurgents may further unsettle the already tense relations between the authorities of Iraqi Kurdistan and Baghdad.

### **Political and Security Context:**

On 20 April, Iraq held its first provincial elections since the departure of U.S. troops, which, despite a 50% turnout only, were considered to be an important test of the country's political stability ahead of next year's parliamentary elections. As the Prime Minister's State of Law coalition came top in the elections but failed to win a majority in any district, it will need to find allies to keep senior provincial posts. The three oil-rich Kurdish provinces in Northern Iraq are scheduled to hold provincial elections at a later date in September 2013. The ongoing violence also forced the authorities to postpone the elections in the two Sunni dominated provinces of Anbar and Nineveh.

Meanwhile, the country is facing widespread unrest and is plagued by daily terrorist attacks. The current wave of violence is largely linked to the country's long-running political dispute between Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and religious and ethnic groups opposing the allegedly sectarian policies of his Shia-led Government. Following the last wave of violence in Iraq, tensions are now reportedly at their highest since the U.S. troops left the country two years ago. In parallel, the civil war in neighbouring Syria also participates in straining the fragile relations between Sunni, Shi'ite and Kurdish communities and making the Iraqi context highly volatile.

Over the past week, Iraq went through another bloody week marked by large-scale terrorist attacks across the country. Tensions between Shi'ites and minority Sunni Muslims have reached such a level that some observers fear that the country slides back into all-out civil war. On 20 May, over 70 people – mostly Shi'ites – were killed in a series of car bombings and suicide attacks across the country, notably hitting the capital Baghdad, the predominately Shi'ite city of Basra southeast of the capital, the city of Balad north of the capital and the city of Hila south of Baghdad. Adding the casualties from the 20 May, the overall death toll raised to over 200 people killed in sectarian clashes across the country in the last week. While tensions between different sectarian neighbourhoods are running high in Baghdad, the western province of Anbar has also grown increasingly insecure over the past weeks. When intersectarian strife was at its height in 2006-07, Anbar was reportedly a stronghold of al-Qaeda's Iraqi wing, which has reportedly regained strength in recent months. On 20 May, the 14 people, including six policemen, kidnapped in Anbar on 18 May were found dead.

In early May, several small-scale bombings have targeted oil-rich areas along the contested border of Iraqi Kurdistan. While tensions are also running high between Baghdad and the Kurds with an ongoing feud over northern oil control, it was reported on 14 May that the first group of Kurdish militants from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) to leave Turkey under a recent peace deal arrived into Iraq. The arrival of former PKK insurgents may further unsettle the already tense relations between the authorities of Iraqi Kurdistan and Baghdad.

Confirming the current upsurge in violence in figures, figures released by UNAMI early May showed a total of 712 people (595 civilians) killed and 1,633 (1,428 civilians) wounded in terrorist attacks and acts of violence throughout the country in April, making it the deadliest month since June 2008.

### **Humanitarian context and needs:**

**Displacement:** As of 16 May, the number of registered Syrian refugees in Iraq reached 148,028 with Kurdistan hosting 90% of the refugees. At present, daily arrivals to Iraq have reached a rate of 700-750 people, according to UNHCR.

The situation at Domiz camp, in northwest Iraq's Dohuk Governorate, is especially worrying. It is currently housing some 40,000 Syrian refugees and is critically overcrowded. Thousands of families are sharing tents with newly arrived refugees as almost 3,500 families do not have their own shelter.

A large number of Iraqis residing in Syria have also returned to Iraq, with, as of 22 January, a total of 68,122 since mid-July 2012, according to UNHCR. Baghdad receives the largest number of returnees.

An estimated 1.2 million were displaced inside Iraq by 11 June 2012 but updated displacement figures remain lacking.

**Access:** Although humanitarian access has become less restricted, security threats for international staff remain high, particularly in Baghdad, north/central governorates and the Disputed Territories.

**Health:** The overcrowding in Domiz camp is having an impact on sanitation, which is already below humanitarian standards. Congestion and warmer temperatures are increasing vulnerability to outbreaks of diseases, as well as to tension between camp residents. Measles cases have been reported amongst new arrivals in the camp.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*

### **JORDAN DISPLACEMENT**

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The number of Syrian refugees crossing the border to Jordan continues to increase. As of 19 May, over 474,405 Syrian refugees, including those awaiting registration, have crossed into Jordan according to UNHCR. The Government of Jordan estimates that some 513,000 Syrian refugees currently reside in the country as of 9 May.

As a result of the refugee influx, Jordan's economy, water and energy resources remain strained. The prices of commodities are higher in Jordan if compared to Syria and the purchasing power of the refugees to cover basic needs keeps decreasing. Furthermore, food prices in Jordan have increased by nearly 50% due to the reduction of food imports and increased demand from new arrivals from Syria. In addition, recent reports warn of signs of rising tensions between Jordanians and Syrian refugees, in particular those regions that host large number of displaced Syrians.

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### **KYRGYZSTAN FOOD INSECURITY**

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In September 2012, an estimated 25% of the population of Kyrgyzstan – about 1.3 million people – were considered food insecure according to WFP's Household Food Security Assessment.

The highest levels of food insecurity were found in Jalalabad (48%), Osh (38%) and Batken (38%) regions. The situation of currently food-insecure and vulnerable households is likely to further deteriorate during spring when stocks of food from the previous harvest will be depleted and additional inputs are required for the spring planting campaign. The WFP assessment also revealed that another 13% of households – some 547,000 people – are at risk of becoming food insecure should they be affected by an additional shock, such as further rises in food prices.

In March 2013, the retail price of wheat flour did not change on a month-on-month basis and remained at high levels. Since June 2012, the price has increased by 56% in rural and 47% in urban areas, and by an average of 52% across the country. The domestic retail price of wheat flour in March was 42% higher than in the same month of last year and only 4% lower than the peak level of early 2011.

The 2012 wheat production was affected by delayed planting due to a long cold winter, followed by a hot summer. The latest estimate puts cereal production at about 1.3 million tonnes, which is some 19% lower than last year's level.

In 2010, 34% of the population was living below the national poverty line.

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## **PHILIPPINES** CONFLICT, FLOODS, TYPHOON

The Philippines frequently experiences natural disasters, particularly tropical storms and cyclones. Typhoon Bopha (Pablo) struck the Philippines on 4 December 2012, causing extensive damage across the island of Mindanao. As of 17 May, 6.2 million people are still affected by Bopha, 921,649 people are displaced outside evacuation centres and a further 11,676 are residing in evacuation centres. A total of 158,769 households are totally or partially damaged.

Continuous rains caused floods in Agusan del Sur in the Province of Pampanga in late February. Some 49,073 people were affected as of 27 February, according to the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. The Municipality of San Luis has the highest number of affected, amounting to 19,577 across 11 barangays (villages), followed by the municipality of Veruela with 12,125 persons affected across 12 barangays. Several municipalities have suffered damages on large agricultural stretches.

Four consecutive days of rain combined with the tail-end of a cold front led to rising water levels in Mindanao in January. As of 26 January, there were more than 507,700 people affected, the majority of them, 369,000, in Davao Region.

According to the Department of Health, 1,528 dengue cases have been reported in the first quarter of 2013 in the Soccsksargen region. Some 669 or 41% of the victims are children 10 years old and below.

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## **DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA** FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

On 19 May, North Korea test-fired a short-range missile off its east coast, its fourth in two days. The launch was undertaken despite pleas from South Korea and the UN chief to halt the launches at a time of high tensions. Prior to the launch, tension on the Korean peninsula had subsided over the past month. It escalated in February, following tougher sanctions by the United Nations Security Council's against Pyongyang following its third nuclear test.

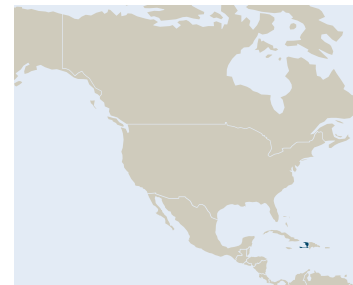
According to a recent report by FAO, the acute malnutrition rates have improved this year due to better food rations and a consistent food assistance pipeline. However, according to the report, some 2.8 million people are still estimated to face severe food insecurity in the northeast provinces of the country.

The chronic under-nutrition remains a public health problem. Some 57% of households have 'borderline' food consumption. Chronic food insecurity in DPRK continues to affect two-thirds of the country's 24 million people. According to the UN, the main 2012 harvests and 2013 early season crops will see a 10% increase compared to a year earlier and the production is expected to reach 5.8 million metric tons. WFP reports that the current consumption, as of 14 May, shows already deterioration after the main harvest with increased number of households with poor consumption.

DPRK still requires international humanitarian assistance. Flooding and a subsequent typhoon in July and August 2012 affected an estimated 700,000 people, damaged health facilities and reduced access to primary and secondary health care. The floods further aggravated the impact of a severe dry spell in southwest and central provinces: a 30% decline in soybean production due to the dry spells in the first half of 2012 has been reported.

Humanitarian access is limited. No current data on child mortality, the food security situation, food price levels and general magnitude of humanitarian needs is available. Therefore, DPRK is not included within the Global Overview prioritisation.

*Updated: 21/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*



# NORTH AMERICA

## **HAITI** FLOODS, EPIDEMIC, HURRICANE

Some 2.1 million people in Haiti are severely food insecure and risk a nutritional crisis, according to OCHA as of the beginning of April. An estimated 82,000 children <5 suffer from acute malnutrition, of which 20,400 have Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). Rural populations are especially affected. Large parts of the country face Stressed levels of food security (IPC Phase 2). Reports on the food security situation indicate that the poor and very poor in some municipalities in the Sud-est, Ouest and Nord-est departments are already in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) despite the implementation of irreversible survival strategies, according to FEWSNET. In addition, sowing of the 2013 spring season cereal crops, mainly maize, which normally starts in February/March, was delayed in the main valleys due to below average rains during January and first half of February. Poor seed availability is also threatening the success of this year's crops.

Since the start of the cholera outbreak in October 2010, the cumulative number of cases amounts to 645,964, with as much as 118,000 potential new cholera cases forecasted for 2013. As of 19 February, 8,020 deaths have been reported. According to OCHA, 18,756 new cholera cases were reported between January and April 2013, resulting in 190 deaths. Contamination of rivers, unhygienic conditions and inadequate sanitation remain among the principal causes explaining the spread of the disease.

Torrential rains caused by Hurricane Sandy led to massive flooding, affecting 1.5 million people. Ouest, Sud-Est, Nippes, Grande-Anse and Sud were the most affected. As of beginning of April, 71,400 victims of Hurricane Sandy still need humanitarian assistance according to OCHA. Recent surveys show that 119 of 140 municipalities were severely affected by drought, Tropical Storm Isaac and/or Hurricane Sandy in 2012, displacing at least 58,000 people in total.

Almost three years after the earthquake, there remain some 320,000 IDPs in Haiti according to the IOM as of mid-April. Since the beginning of the year, the number has decreased by 27,230 people.

*Updated: 13/05/2013 - Reviewed: 21/05/2013*



## OCEANIA

### MARSHALL ISLANDS DROUGHT

According to OCHA, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Cabinet issued an elevated state of disaster on 7 May as the prolonged and severe drought in the northern

parts of the country worsens, notably hitting Wotje and the atolls north of Majuro.

Because of unusually low levels of rain since February, the local crops are heavily at risk and an alarming shortage of drinking water has been reported. There is a high likelihood that RMI will remain in drought conditions through July, although rainfall may possibly come in late May.

Up to an estimated 6,000 people are living in the drought-affected atolls and are severely affected as of mid-May. An additional 11,000 people are experiencing less severe drought conditions while crop losses have already been reported in the area.

*Updated 21/05/2013 – Reviewed 21/05/2013*



## SOUTH AMERICA

### BOLIVIA FLOODS

Torrential rain and floods caused damage across Bolivia. According to OCHA five of Bolivia's nine departments are under a state of emergency for flooding and close to 145,000 people are affected in nearly 25% of Bolivia's municipalities. The southern departments are the most affected, especially Chuquisaca, Potosi, Tarija and Cochabamba. In the department of Cochabamba, some 40,000 (8,000 families) were affected between 18 and 25 March.

According to the Ministry of Rural Lands and Development, at least 15,000 hectares of crops have been damaged but the Ministry discounts the possibility of food security risks. However, according to a WFP report, at least 25,000 people may need immediate food assistance. According to Civil Defense reports, the rainy season has caused 24 casualties to date.

*Updated: 13/05/2013 – Reviewed: 21/05/2013*



## Introduction to the Global Overview Update

The Global Overview is a weekly update that provides a snapshot of current humanitarian priorities and recent events. The Global Overview collates information from a wide range of sources, including Reliefweb and media sources, and displays this information in a manner that allows for quick comparison of different humanitarian crises. The primary objective of the Global Overview is to rapidly inform humanitarian decision makers by presenting a summary of major humanitarian crises, both recent and protracted. It is designed to provide answers to four questions;

1. Which humanitarian crises currently exist? (World map)
2. What has happened in the last seven days? (Highlights and snapshot)
3. What is the situation in the country affected by a crisis? (Narrative)
4. Which countries could be prioritised in terms of humanitarian response? (Prioritisation)

### The Global Overview consists of three main sections:

Firstly, the **world map** provides an overview of how the countries are prioritised, indicated by different shades of blue. The countries are subdivided by four **priority levels**: "on watch", "situation of concern", "humanitarian crisis", and "severe humanitarian crisis".

The priority levels are assigned on the basis of:

- the number of people affected by recent disasters
- the level of access to the affected population
- the <5 mortality rate
- the level of development of the country
- the number of protracted IDPs and refugees.

If a country experienced a disaster in the seven days prior to an update, or witnessed an escalation of an on-going crisis, a country is **highlighted** by a yellow dot on the map.

Secondly, the **snapshot** briefly describes what has happened in the last seven days from the date of publication, by outlining the crises that have occurred in the different highlighted countries.

Thirdly, **narratives** for each country included in the Global Overview reflect recent major developments and underlying vulnerabilities of a country. Narratives are written based on secondary data.

### The Global Emergency Overview is a mobile application.

To download the mobile application for Android phones [click here](#).

Or go here: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.acaps.acaps>

### Update

The Global Overview will be updated once a week and the results will be available every Monday before midday (Central European Time/Central European Summer Time). In case of major new humanitarian events or an escalation of an on-going crisis which triggers a change of prioritisation, the Global Overview will be updated on an ad-hoc basis.

### Disclaimer

While ACAPS has defined a methodology striving to ensure accuracy, the information provided is indicative and should not be used in isolation from alternate sources of information for any decision making. ACAPS is not responsible for any damage or loss resulting from the use of the information presented on this website.

More information on the Global Overview Methodology can be found in the [Global Overview Methodology Brief](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).