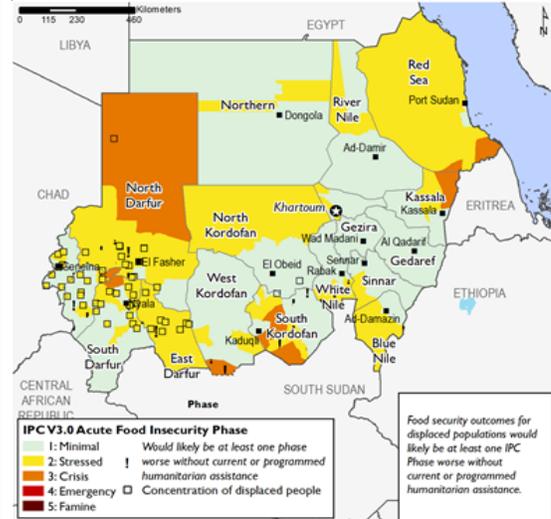


*Sorghum and millet prices atypically continue to increase during the main harvest season*

**KEY MESSAGES**

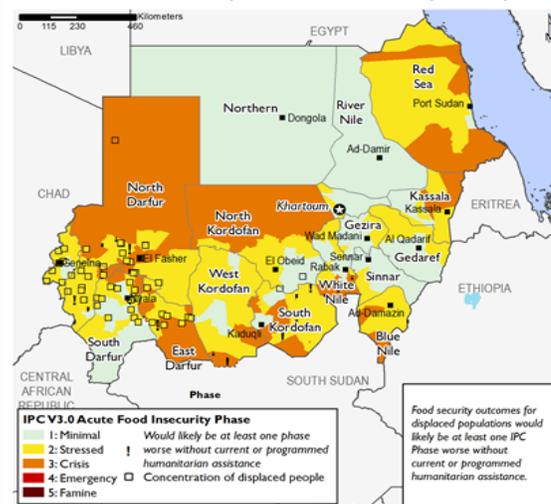
- Sudan will continue facing above-average emergency humanitarian assistance needs due to the persistent macroeconomic crisis, the influx of Ethiopian refugees from Tigray, and increased health needs driven by the second wave of COVID-19 infections. Although the harvest is improving food security outcomes among poor rural households, the number of households facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity will remain high, particularly among IDPs, refugees, and urban poor households. The extremely high food prices and below-average household purchasing power will continue driving above-average assistance needs through May 2021.
- The ongoing harvest of the 2020/21 season is constrained by a combination of high prices and shortages of labor, fuel, inputs, and transportation. The sesame and groundnut harvest has been completed in the semi-mechanized and traditional sectors. The cereal and other cash crops harvest are still underway and expected to continue through January 2021. Delays due to the shortages and high prices are likely to drive above-average pre-harvest losses.
- Staple food prices continued to atypically increase during harvest period of November/December 2020. This is mainly due to the extremely high production costs, delayed harvest, and the continued depreciation of the Sudanese Pound. In December, sorghum and millet prices increased 10-20 percent and remained 240-300 percent higher than respective 2019 prices and seven times above the five-year average.
- Due to the ongoing fighting in Ethiopia's Tigray region, over 50,000 Ethiopian refugees have crossed into eastern and southeastern Sudan, primarily Kassala and Al Gedaref states. However, the daily arrival rate has steadily decreased since the beginning of the conflict. The refugees are expected to increase the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Sudan.
- The second wave of COVID-19 is ongoing in Sudan, with over 7,648 confirmed cases and 232 fatalities recorded between November 7 and December 14, 2020. Significant increases in confirmed COVID-19 cases have been reported in Khartoum and seven other states. The Ministry of Health has warned that the current wave of COVID-19 will likely be more severe.

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

## CURRENT SITUATION

### *Conflict and Ethiopian refugees*

Due to conflict and ongoing fighting in Ethiopia's Tigray region, there has been an influx of Ethiopian refugees into Sudan's bordering states of Al Gadaref, Kassala, and Blue Nile. According to UNHCR, since the start of the conflict on November 10, 2020, more than 54,400 refugees from Ethiopia have arrived in Sudan, with around 70 percent of refugees arriving through the Hamdayet border post in Kassala State and 29 percent through Lugdi and Abderafi border post in Al Gedaref state, and 1 percent through Wad Al Mahi border post in Blue Nile state. According to UNHCR and the government's Commission for Refugees (COR), as of December 28, 2020, refugees have arrived at an average rate of approximately 1,107 people per day since November 10, 2020. However, there has been a steady decrease in refugees' influx, with an average of 321 refugees crossing per day between December 1 and December 28, 2020. Over 20,500 refugees have been relocated from Hamdayet, and Abderafi border points to Um Rakuba camp in Al Gadaref state. UNHCR anticipates approximately 100,000 refugees to arrive over the next six months if instability in Ethiopia's Tigray region continues. The influx of refugees from Ethiopia is expected to increase the number of people in need to humanitarian assistance in Sudan.

### *COVID-19*

Sudan is currently in the second wave of a COVID-19 outbreak. The Ministry of Health (MoH) has reported that there have been over 7,000 newly confirmed cases between November 7 and December 13, a 55 percent increase in the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Since November, approximately 89 percent of the confirmed COVID-19 cases were registered in Khartoum, 3 percent in El Gezira, 2 percent in River Nile states, and about 1 percent in El Gedaref, Kassala, Sennar, South Darfur, and White Nile states. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Khartoum and El Gezira have registered 76 percent and 8 percent of the cumulative confirmed cases, respectively. However, availability and access to COVID-19 tests across the country remain limited. The MoH has warned that the current wave of COVID-19 will likely be more severe than the previous wave, with a greater rate of death and a substantial increase in infections. As of December 14, the Sudanese government has not indicated any intention to impose a second lockdown to control the spread of COVID-19. As of mid-December, all primary and secondary schools and most universities are closed. The government has instructed all government institutions to plan and implement 30-50 percent of staff shifts at offices and reduce official and social gatherings. As of December 22, the Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority is preventing the entry to passengers from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and South Africa following the emergence of a new strain of COVID-19 first identified in the United Kingdom. This restriction will remain in place until January 5, 2021. Nevertheless, all markets remain open and economic activities are operating normal business hours.

### *Macroeconomic crisis and prices*

Sudan's macroeconomic situation remains very poor as the value of the Sudanese Pound continues to depreciate on the parallel market. Persistently low reserves of foreign currency, and increased shortages of USD in the official banking system, coupled with high demand for imports of essential food and non-food items including wheat, fuel, and medicine, have driven further depreciation of the Sudanese Pound from 240 SDG/USD in October to 257 SDG/USD November and 268 SDG/USD in December. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), the national inflation rate in November was 254 percent, a 24.5 percentage points increase compared to October 2020, and almost 140 percentage points over the last six months, and 217 percentage points over the five-year average for November.

### *Main season harvest and progress of winter season*

Since the end of October, the 2020/21 main cropping season's harvest has been fully underway across crop-producing areas. It is expected to continue through January 2021 in the semi-mechanized and irrigated sectors. The harvests of sesame and groundnut (the main cash-crops) are completed, while the harvest of cereals and other cash crops (cotton, sunflower, and pigeon peas) are still ongoing and expected to be delayed due to late replanting caused by flooding in some areas in addition to high costs and labor shortages at the beginning of the season. According to field information, the ongoing harvest is highly impacted by shortages and high costs of fuel, jute and plastic sacks, and extremely high transportation costs. Crop yields are reportedly lower than usual due to flooding, waterlogging, and pest infestations, but overall, a near-average harvest is expected.

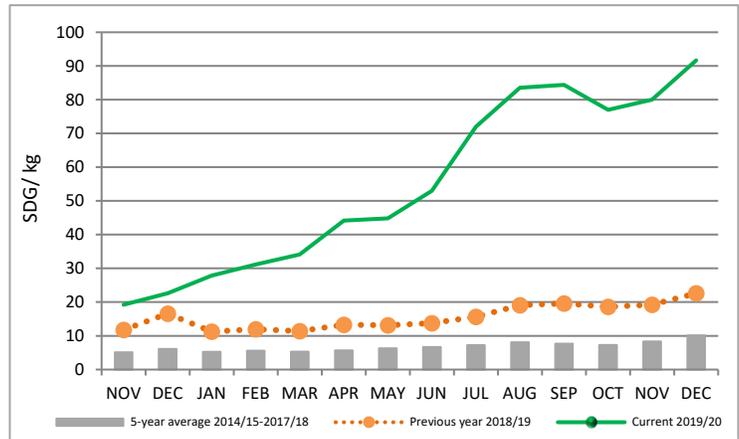
Since the beginning of November, wheat cultivation for the 2020/21 winter season has been ongoing in the main wheat

production areas in Sudan. Approximately one million feddan (420,000 hectares) have been targeted for planting this season, almost 28 percent above targeted areas compared to the 2019/20 season. Most of the targeted area is under the main-irrigated schemes of Al Gazeira, Rahad, and Halfa El Gadeeda located in Al Gazeira, Kassala, and Al Gadaref states in addition to small-scale cultivation in Northern, River Nile, and White Nile states. However, as of mid-December, the area cultivated is reportedly far below targeted areas, constrained by the high costs and shortages of agricultural inputs, fertilizers, seeds, fuel, and agricultural finance.

*Staple food prices*

Despite the ongoing harvest, in November and December, the retail prices of the main locally produced staples, sorghum, and millet, have atypically increased across most main production and consumption markets. In most markets, prices have reported a 10-20 percent monthly increase between October through December. Across main markets, sorghum sold on average for 82 SDG/kg in December 2020 compared to 70 and 72 SDG/kg for October and November, respectively. Current sorghum and millet prices remained on average 240-300 percent higher than respective 2019 prices and seven times above the five-year average. This unseasonal increase in sorghum and millet prices is impacted by the rapid depreciation of the Sudanese Pound and extremely high production and transportation costs, delays in the harvest, a lower than anticipated harvest, and limited carryover stock at the market and household level. Higher than typical cereal demand during the harvest period is keeping market supplies low as big traders seek to build their stocks in anticipation of high prices in the lean season and increased demand by humanitarian actors providing support to Ethiopian refugees in eastern Sudan.

**Figure 1.** Retail prices of sorghum, Al Gadarif market, November 2019-December 2020.



Locally produced wheat prices seasonally increased between October and December 2020. In Dongola, the main wheat production and consumption market, wheat sold for 250 SDG/Kg in December compared to 166 and 196 SDG/Kg for October and November 2020, respectively, around 400 percent over prices for December last year and 10 times above the five-year average. On average, across Sudan, wheat prices in December are 300 percent higher than in December 2019 and almost seven times higher than the five-year average. The main drivers for the high locally produced wheat prices are seasonally reduced supplies from the last harvest in March/April 2020, higher than normal demand due to shortages, and high prices of imported wheat and wheat flour, along with the depreciation of the Sudanese Pound.

Livestock prices had mixed trends across most markets between October and December 2020. Goat and sheep prices increased by 5-10 percent across some markets, but in other markets, goat and sheep prices remained relatively stable or slightly declined, including Ad Damazin, Al Gadaref, Om Dorman, El Damer, and Kassala markets. The mixed trends in prices are mainly attributed to the combined impacts of the seasonally increased supply of livestock into local markets and disruption in exports to Saudi Arabia which coincided with the Sudanese Pound's depreciation and high transportation cost. Across the main livestock markets, the December 2020 goat and sheep prices are almost double compared to last year and over 365 percent higher than the five-year average.

*Humanitarian assistance*

Between October and December 2020, WFP and implementing partners provided approximately 78,852 MT of food assistance and 10 million USD in cash vouchers to over 2.6 million beneficiaries. Most beneficiaries reached by humanitarian assistance were IDPs and conflict-affected people in Greater Darfur, government-controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, refugees from South Sudan, flood-affected households, chronically food-insecure areas of eastern and western Sudan, and newly arrived Ethiopian refugees fleeing conflict in Tigray region.

## UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The assumptions used to develop FEWS NET's most likely scenario for the [Sudan Food Security Outlook for October 2020 to May 2021](#) remain unchanged.

## PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH MAY 2021

The ongoing main agricultural season harvest is improving household food access from own production and in-kind payments from agricultural labor. Food security outcomes for many areas will improve to Minimal (IPC Phase 1) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) while Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcome will likely persist among IDPs in SPLM-N controlled areas of South Kordofan, IDPs and conflict-affected households in Jebel Marra in Darfur and newly arrived refugees in eastern Sudan through February 2021. However, emergency food assistance needs are expected to remain above typical levels through the harvest period due to the continued influx of refugees from Ethiopia, protracted displacement in Darfur and South Kordofan, and the economic impact of COVID-19, along with the persistent macroeconomic crisis.

In urban centers, poor households are likely to have below-average food access through May 2021 due to the extremely high food prices limiting household purchasing power. Together with the second wave of COVID-19 infections, the continued macroeconomics crisis will continue reducing household access to income-earning opportunities. Poor urban households will likely continue facing difficulty meeting their basic food needs, driving an increase in the number of households facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity outcomes. If further COVID-19 containment measures are imposed, the number of urban poor households facing Crisis (IPC phases 3) outcomes are expected to increase, particularly with the beginning of the lean season in April/May 2021.

In pastoral areas, poor households are likely to face reduced access to food and income by March 2021 due to their high dependency on market purchases, low income from the sale of forest products, and reduced labor access. In May 2021, staple food prices are expected to peak, further lowering livestock-to-sorghum terms-of-trade and weakening household purchasing power, along with the seasonal decline in household milk access and other animal products. Food consumption of poor households is likely to deteriorate, driving an increase in households facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes compared to the post-harvest period. Of more concern are poor pastoralists in the northern parts of North Darfur, parts of North Kordofan, and poor households in the Eastern Pastoral zones of northern Kassala and Red Sea states.

In agricultural and agropastoral areas, between January and March 2021, poor households will continue to have improved access to food and income from their production and agricultural labor. However, with the beginning of the lean season in April, household food security will begin to deteriorate as poor households' food stocks diminish, cereal prices begin to increase seasonally, and households' increase their dependency on market food purchases. An increased number of IDPs in less accessible areas of SPLM-N-controlled areas of South Kordofan and in Jebel Marra is expected to continue facing food consumption gaps through the scenario period, with an increase in the number of households facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) during the lean season in April and May 2021.

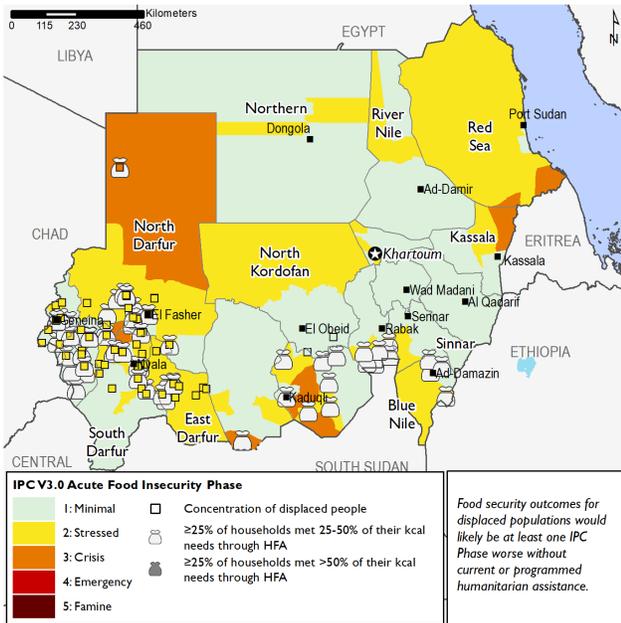
### ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates the FEWS NET's Food Security Outlook, which is published three times per year. Learn more about our work [here](#).

### MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES AND AREAS RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

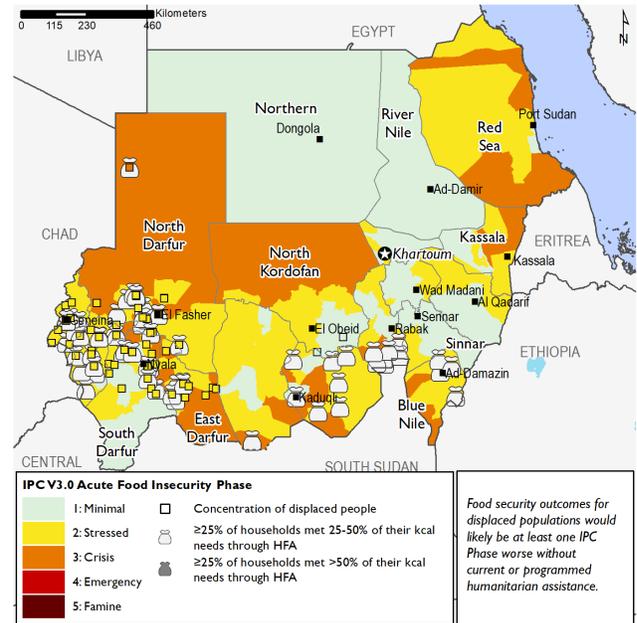
Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.0 humanitarian assistance mapping protocols and flags where significant levels of humanitarian assistance are being/are expected to be provided. ☐ indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average 25–50 percent of caloric needs from humanitarian food assistance (HFA). ☒ indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average over 50 percent of caloric needs through HFA. This mapping protocol differs from the (!) protocol used in the maps at the top of the report. The use of (!) indicates areas that would likely be at least one phase worse in the absence of current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

Projected food security outcomes, December 2020 to January 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

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