

## FEWS NET overviews

*For an analysis of refugee flows into Kenya, see back page*

**AFGHANISTAN:** Severe drought, high food prices, and ongoing conflict have led to widespread food insecurity. Ongoing wheat imports and increased humanitarian aid are expected to ensure sufficient food availability until early 2009. However, another emergency appeal will likely be required by February/March 2009 due to poor response to the current appeal and expected price increases during the February–April hunger season.

**ETHIOPIA:** The number of people requiring emergency assistance between June and October 2008 increased to 6.4 million, following successive poor rains, crop failure, high food prices, and water shortages in some areas. Households in parts of the country, particularly pastoral areas in the south and east, are already highly and extremely food insecure; and, if October-December rains are below-normal in these areas, conditions in these areas would deteriorate further. Assistance to date has been slow and inadequate, meeting only a portion of total food and non-food needs.

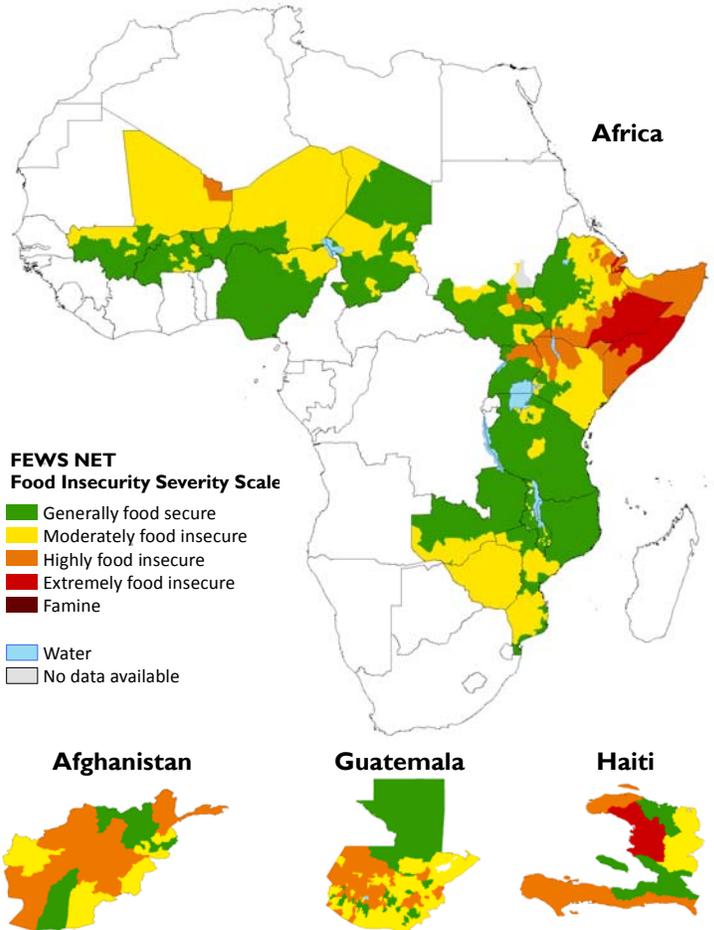
**HAITI:** Haiti continues to recover from four major storms in August and September. Humanitarian aid has been largely adequate to date. Still, some areas, particularly in the southern peninsula, remain isolated. Second-season harvests may be less storm-affected than initially assessed, and food prices are declining. However, prices remain above-average, and access to employment and credit are critical for household food security. The government, donors, and humanitarian partners must quickly transition to development activities to promote long-term food security.

**KENYA:** Food insecurity in drought-affected northern and eastern pastoral areas has intensified after a succession of poor rains, livestock disease, conflict, and high food and non-food prices. If the October-December rains are below-normal, conditions in pastoral areas will worsen, and rates of destitution and migration to urban areas will likely increase.

**ZIMBABWE:** Zimbabwe faces a critical shortage of seeds and fertilizer as the October-March agricultural season begins. As a result, this season's maize planting could be delayed or reduced. During the second half of the season, when late planted maize will be particularly vulnerable to dry spells, rains are forecast to be below-normal over the higher potential central and eastern regions. Current food stocks will only meet consumption needs through mid-November 2008, and commercial and humanitarian food imports must be accelerated to avoid potential gaps in availability.

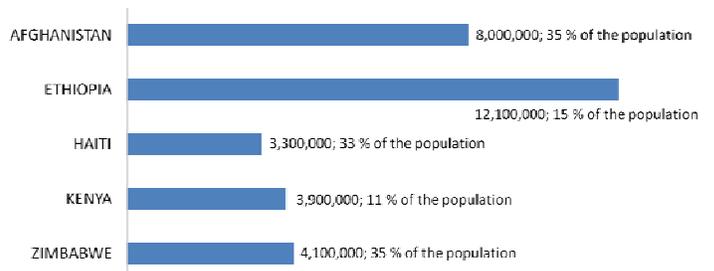
## Current estimated food security conditions

October to December 2008

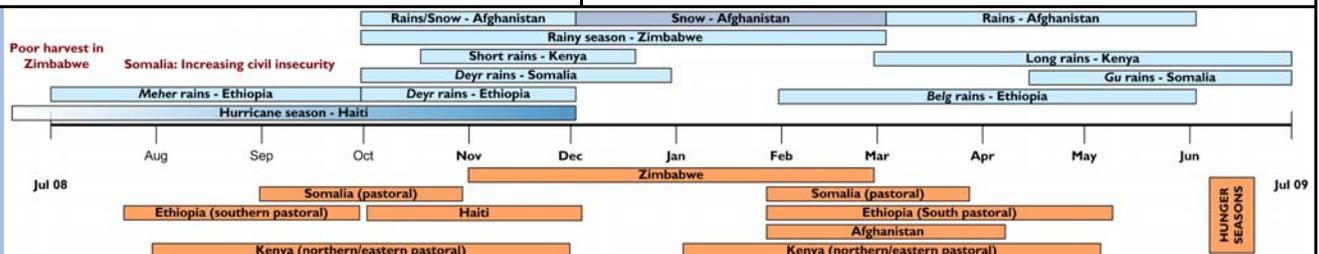


*These maps show the highest estimated severity of food insecurity in each area, based on the latest assessment and monitoring data, as well as baseline data and analysis.*

## Selected food insecure populations



## Critical events timeline



**Rising refugee flows from Somalia and Ethiopia expected in northeastern Kenya**

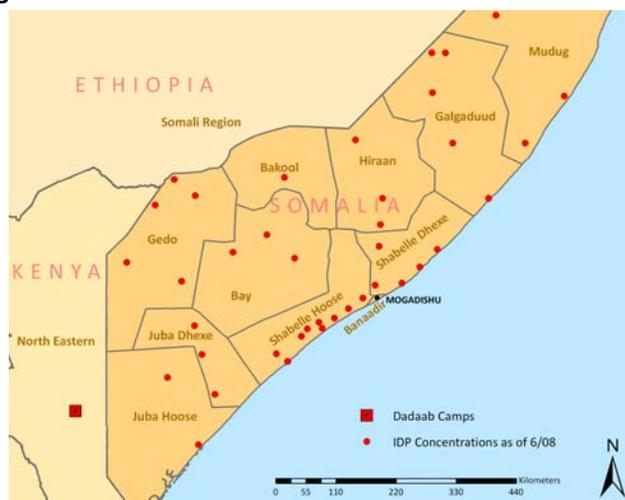
High and extreme food insecurity continues to push large numbers of people out of southern and central Somalia and Ethiopia's Somali Region and into neighboring countries. More than 220,000 people now reside in the Dadaab camps in northeastern Kenya, 28,000 arriving since June 2008. An additional 8,700 refugees are awaiting registration, some for up to four weeks. While the number of new arrivals is expected to drop over the next eight weeks, largely due to poor road conditions resulting from recent rains, it is expected to begin rising in January, when the rains end. By early 2009, the number of new arrivals could reach 7,000/month. Urgent interventions, including efforts to improve civil security, are required in Ethiopia and Somalia to minimize further outmigration. In Kenya, additional food and non-food assistance and new camp construction are needed to ensure support to refugees and reduce pressure on local populations.

Three primary factors in Somalia and Ethiopia are contributing to the increasing flow of refugees into northeastern Kenya. First, drought has led to crop failure and deteriorating livestock conditions, reducing food availability and household income. Second, ongoing conflict in both countries has eroded civil security, further constrained agricultural production, and interrupted market activities. This conflict, combined with imposed trade and movement restrictions in Ethiopia, is also preventing humanitarian aid and commercial goods from reaching some drought-affected areas. Finally, food insecurity has been further exacerbated by high prices, particularly in Somalia.

According to UNHCR, 95 percent of refugees arriving in the Dadaab camps since June 2008 have come from Somalia. The majority are from Mogadishu, with significant numbers also coming from Shabelle, Mudug, Galgaduud, Hiraan, Bay, Juba, Gedo, and Bakool regions. Refugee populations are primarily composed of the urban poor, former IDPs, and riverine farmers. Roughly 1,800 refugees have migrated from Somali Region in Ethiopia in the past four months, most via Somalia, but some through Kenya's Moyale and Marsabit districts. Most refugees make their way to Kenya by vehicle, but high transport costs have prevented many Somalis from migrating. Instead, they remain concentrated in areas (Figure 1) where living conditions are extremely poor.

The Dadaab camps, run by UNHCR, were established in 1991-92. These camps were designed to accommodate 100,000 people, and overcrowding has been a problem for many years. A nutrition assessment carried out in February 2008 recorded a GAM rate of 14.7 percent (95 percent CI 13.4-16.1), and a SAM rate of 2.9 percent (95 percent CI 2.3-3.4). These rates are serious, but significantly lower than rates observed in 2005 and 2006. In addition, no disease outbreaks have occurred since late 2007. However, following the onset of rains in October, an upsurge in disease, and a subsequent decline in nutritional status may occur.

**Figure 1. Location of IDP concentrations and the Dadaab camps**



Source: FEWS NET/FSAU

Ninety-eight percent of all food available to refugees is provided by WFP, with the remainder coming from purchases funded by remittances and NGO employment. Until recently, WFP rations provided 2,100 kcal/person/day. However, trading food for non-food items and sharing with relatives is common, and refugees were unlikely to have fully met their caloric needs. Currently, the demand for food rations, in addition to water/sanitation facilities, has far surpassed availability, due in part to increased refugee inflows. Therefore, WFP expects to borrow from other programming to prevent ration cuts during November and December. Depending on the magnitude of refugee inflows, food aid pipelines should be adequate through April 2009, but additional pledges are needed to meet needs beginning in May.

In addition to possible impacts on refugee health (e.g., increased disease prevalence due to overcrowding), the current situation also impacts local populations, primarily through deforestation of areas surrounding the camps. Food prices in areas around the camps are higher than average for this time of year, as are prices in Kenya generally. Limited income has restricted refugee's purchasing power, mitigating their impact on prices. However, pressure on prices could build if the refugee population continues to grow, and if remittance flows increase.

Given overcrowding at the Dadaab camps, and the expected increase in new arrivals, UNHCR's plan to construct new camps should be rapidly implemented. This should be complemented by increased food aid donations, the development of additional water/sanitation facilities, and efforts to reduce local deforestation. Also, the process of registering refugees needs to be accelerated. Concerted local and international efforts are also needed to address civil insecurity in Somalia and Ethiopia.