KEY MESSAGES

- According to the Kenya Food Security Group (KFFSG) 2020 long rains assessment, widespread Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are ongoing. Although desert locusts and floods caused crop and livestock losses, the above-average March-May long rains led to favorable harvests in most marginal agricultural areas as well as above-average livestock sale values and average milk productivity, resulting in a decline in the population in need relative to the preceding 2019 short rains assessment. FEWS NET similarly anticipates widespread area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes, but Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in the Tana Riverine and Mandera Riverine Livelihood zones.

- On August 26, the national curfew and closure of bars and nightclubs were extended for another 30 days, though the closing hour was extended by one hour to 8:00 pm for restaurants. An urban assessment in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu found that 29 percent of respondents in Nairobi and approximately 40-45 percent of respondents in Mombasa and Kisumu reported having not worked in the last seven days. The lack of income-earning opportunities is limiting household food access. Most households reported engaging in coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

- The impact of the forecast below-average October-December short rains on livestock body conditions and productivity is expected to be mitigated by current rangeland conditions and a short-lived rejuvenation in forage and water resources. Livestock productivity and sale values are expected to be stable from November to January. However, the below-average short rains will reduce demand for agricultural waged labor and drive below-average household incomes. The long rains harvest from the unimodal high and medium production areas are expected to sustain average to below-average staple food prices leading to widespread area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes except along Mandera’s border with Somalia where insecurity and poor income-earning opportunities will drive Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.

CURRENT SITUATION

Rainfall performance: In bimodal areas, the above-average March-May long rains were characterized by heavy rains in March and April. In both unimodal and bimodal areas, cumulative rainfall through August 15 has

Projected food security outcomes, August to September 2020

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021
exceeded seasonal averages, with positive anomalies ranging from 100-300 mm across most of the country (Figure 1). Some areas of the Lake Victoria basin and coastal Kenya accumulated more than 300 mm above-average rainfall. The above-average rainfall has increased crop production but caused widespread flooding across the country. Reports indicate that the Turkwell dam is close to reaching capacity and the overflow will potentially affect 300,000 people in the Turkwel Basin in addition to the 1,000 households already displaced along the shores of Lake Turkana.

**Desert Locusts:** Cool temperatures and local winds have likely limited the ability of desert locusts to migrate northwards into Ethiopia and South Sudan, some swarms may remain in Kenya awaiting the start of the short rains in October. Swarms prevail in the pastoral northwestern areas of Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo, and Samburu counties and have impacted approximately 760,000 hectares of both crop and forage land. From March to July, surveillance and control measures have treated approximately 221,000 hectares and kept the desert locusts under control despite constraints tracking the movement of the pests, and the impact of topography and insecurity hampering access to some areas.

**Crop Production:** The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that national maize production is likely 10-15 percent above the five-year average. According to the county departments of agriculture, maize production across most marginal agricultural areas was 16-31 percent above-average but was average in Lamu, and 16-50 percent below average in Makueni, Embu (Mbeere), and Tharaka Nithi. In Kilifi and Nyeri, maize production was 77 percent and 169 percent above the five-year average, respectively. County departments of agriculture (CDAs) estimate that bean production was 25 percent below average in Embu (Mbeere) but was average in Meru (Meru North) and Taita Taveta, and 27 percent above average in Nyeri (Kieni). Green gram production was 45 percent above average in Embu (Mbeere), average in Kitui, Kwale, Lamu, and Taita Taveta but 15-34 percent below average in Tharaka Nithi and Makueni due to waterlogging, and 60 percent below the five-year average in Kilifi due to shortages of agricultural inputs and extension services.

Household access to both food and income has improved following the harvest. Based on estimates from CDAs, household maize stocks range from 12-46 percent above-average in Kilifi, Meru (Meru North), and Taita, to 3-5 times the average in Nyeri and Kitui, and 9-36 percent below average in the rest of the marginal agricultural areas. In Tharaka Nithi and Kwale, household maize stocks are 47-62 percent below average due to consecutive average to below-average harvests. In most areas, household cereal and pulse stocks are normal and expected to last 3-4 months.

**Livestock Production:** Across pastoral areas, adequate recharge of rangeland resources over consecutive rainy seasons has resulted in average to above-average forage that is expected to last 2-6 months compared to the normal 1-4 months, except in Isiolo where desert locust damage and flooding led to below-average regeneration. In July, livestock return trekking distances remained below average except in Wajir and Isiolo where return trekking distances average 8-10 km compared to the normal 6-10 km. Livestock remain close to households in the wet-season grazing areas but in Marsabit, Wajir, Isiolo, and Garissa counties livestock are migrating to dry season grazing areas. Livestock body conditions remain ‘good’ except in Wajir, Isiolo, and Garissa where grazers are in ‘good’ to ‘fair’ body conditions. Household tropical livestock units (TLUs) are currently average to above average except in Tana River, Marsabit, and Isiolo counties where they are 2-5 TLUs compared to the normal 4-10 TLUs. High gestation rates have resulted in below-average milk production and consumption in Marsabit, Mandera, Isiolo, and Tana River counties.
Domestic water availability: Household water availability remains generally high as open water sources such as rivers, pans, and dams were adequately recharged by the long rains. In the marginal agricultural areas, household return trekking distances to water points remain below average at 2-7 km compared to the five-year average of 2-10 kilometers. In pastoral areas, household trekking distances remain 50-60 percent below average ranging from 0.5-6 kilometers except in Marsabit and Garissa where it is 9-15 kilometers, compared to the average 11-17 kilometers.

COVID-19: As of August 30, 2020, Kenya has recorded 34,201 confirmed cases, 19,893 recoveries, and 577 attributed deaths since March. Over the past five months, the restrictions on transportation and movement, night-time curfews, border closures, and business operations have impacted employment and income-earning opportunities, particularly in urban areas, along with disruptions to the staple food supply chain.

Markets and trade: There remains a slowdown in the supply chain and a premium on consumer goods including staple foods. Across marginal and pastoral agricultural areas, maize retail prices range between average to 19 percent below average driven by available harvests and access to high production source markets. However, maize retail prices were 8-20 percent above average in Tana River, Mandera, and Garissa due to flooding and the closure of the Somalia and Ethiopia borders slowing supply from source markets. Beans prices range between average to 31 percent above average driven by low household stocks following below-average long rains production.

Goat prices across pastoral areas were 7-27 percent above the five-year average and 35-42 percent above the five-year averages in Samburu and Garissa driven by good body condition and limited supply to the markets as households look to restock their herds. Consequently, the goat-to-maize terms of trade are average in Mandera and 20-46 percent above the five-year average across most counties.

Urban area outcomes: In August, an urban food security assessment was undertaken by the National IPC TWG and WFP in the informal settlements of Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu cities. Households in informal settlements are likely facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, with the worst-affected households likely facing moderate food consumption gaps due to a lack of income and increasing the necessity to engage in negative coping. Approximately 29, 40, and 45 percent of respondents in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu, respectively, reported having not worked in the last seven days. Despite the majority of households recording an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS) due to a high availability of diverse mostly ready-cooked foods (boiled eggs, sausages, fried bread) at relatively affordable prices in small quantities, 20-22 percent and 3-7 percent of households reported a borderline and poor FCS, respectively. Approximately 90 percent of households across the three cities are consuming 2-3 meals per day, with 82-85 percent of households reporting a reduction in meals per day to the loss of income. Only 15, 32, and 3 percent of households in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu, respectively, attributed the reduction of meals consumed per day due to high food prices. Per the Household Hunger Scale (HHS), 36-40 percent of households reported slight hunger, while 45-55 percent of households reported moderate hunger. Also, between 27 and 33 percent of households across these cities reported engaging in a livelihood coping strategy indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2) such as spending savings, borrowing money, selling household assets, renting a cheaper house, or sharing a dwelling with other households; while 23-31 percent of households have employed at least one coping strategy indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) which include begging and engaging in illegal or risky activities such as the illegal sale of charcoal and alcohol. Since urban households are primarily dependent on daily wages, the significant reduction in income has resulted in most households only being able to meet minimum food needs through coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) such as the sale of productive assets/means of transport, reduced spending on health and education, or moving back to the village, other rural areas, or neighboring towns.

Marginal agricultural areas outcomes: Food security across marginal agricultural areas has improved with the long rains harvest. Poor households are expected to maintain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security outcomes, however, the most vulnerable households are likely facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes. According to July NDMA sentinel site data, food consumption trends and dietary diversity have improved compared to June. However, in July, 11-45 percent of households reported a borderline FCS while 1-5 percent reported poor FCS, with 10 percent of households in Kwale reporting a poor FCS. Regarding rCSI, 20-88 percent of households were engaged in consumption coping strategies indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes while 9-21 percent of households reported engaging in of coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse, with 38 percent of households in Kwale reporting engaging in coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse. Additionally, 3-26 percent of households were engaged in at least one livelihood coping strategy indicative of Stressed
(IPC Phase 2), expect in Nyeri where 50 percent of households engaged in at least one livelihood coping strategy indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2). According to the August 2020 IPC Acute Malnutrition Analysis (IPC AMA), the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) measured by Middle Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC <135mm) was ‘Acceptable’ (GAM MUAC <5 percent) across marginal agricultural areas.

**Pastoral outcomes**: Based on current household access to food and income, high livestock prices, good rangeland resources, and limited COVID-19 impacts, Minimal (IPC Phase 1) area-level outcomes are expected in West Pokot and Narok counties and parts of Baringo, Laikipia, and Samburu counties. However, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes remain most likely across most pastoral areas as high staple food prices and below-average milk production is limiting household purchasing power despite above-average goat-to-maize terms-of-trade. Poor households yet to recover from the impacts of successive droughts and floods are likely to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). In the Tana Riverine and Mandera Riverine livelihood zones, where floods destroyed livelihoods and displaced households, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected. In Mandera, poor households with limited income-earning opportunities and facing food access constraints due to insecurity are likely facing moderate consumption gaps or increasing the necessity to engage in negative coping.

According to the KFSSG long rains assessment, 1-33 percent and 10-48 percent of households in pastoral counties reported a poor and borderline FCS, respectively. As indicated by rCSI, 51-83 percent of households are engaged in consumption coping strategies indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2), while 2-46 percent of households are engaged in consumption coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse. Across pastoral areas, 6-50 percent and 9-60 percent of households reported engaging in at least one livelihood coping strategy indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3), respectively. At least one livelihood coping strategy indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) such as the sale of the last female animal or begging has been employed by 1-23 percent of households. However, with overall stable food consumption trends and consumption-based coping strategies, along with below-average return trekking distances, good livestock body conditions, and above-average livestock prices, food security in pastoral areas has remained stable since the 2019/20 short rains season. Household nutrition has also remained stable since February driven by near-average to average milk availability and consumption, average to above-average food access, and improved water availability. Across pastoral areas, children at risk of malnutrition ranged from ‘Acceptable’ (GAM MUAC <5 percent) to ‘Critical’ (GAM MUAC 10-14.9 percent).

**UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS**

The assumptions used to develop FEWS NET’s most likely scenario for the Kenya Food Security Outlook for June to January 2021 remain unchanged apart from the following:

- Based on funding levels for a national desert locust response control operations are expected to continue surveillance and aerial, vehicle-mounted, and ground spraying across all affected counties to curb infestations. Funding is sufficient for control operations through December 2020 despite initial projections that it was to last through September.

- According to the Ministry of Agriculture estimates, the long rains crop harvest in October in unimodal areas is expected to be 10-15 percent above the five-year average for maize, despite some losses due to excessive rainfall and a dry spell at the crop flowering stage in some counties. However, the beans and green grams harvest is expected to be slightly below average due to excess rainfall impacting crop development.

- WFP is expected to disburse cash transfers equivalent to at least 50 percent of daily kilocalorie needs to at least 70,500 households as emergency humanitarian assistance in Nairobi’s informal settlements for three months from September through November.

- Due to ongoing global concern about COVID-19, the impacts on Kenya’s economy are likely to persist through the scenario period. The continued impact of the COVID-19 related restrictions on business operating hours, employment opportunities, transportation of goods, and reduced business revenues are expected to delay the return of near-normal operations in most economic sectors by the end of the scenario period.
MOST LIKELY PROJECTED OUTCOMES THROUGH JANUARY 2021

In the urban areas, staple food prices are expected to drop below five-year averages as local harvests from the unimodal areas become available in September. The lack of wage labor opportunities for urban poor households is likely to be the main limiting factor to food access. Reduced household income will likely drive continued intensified application of consumption and livelihood coping strategies. COVID-19 restrictions are expected to be eased; however, the economy is unlikely to make a complete recovery within the scenario period. Consequently, income-earning opportunities are likely to remain below average as the economy and businesses gradually recover. Households that receive cash transfers in early September will likely be Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) at least through November, while households that do not receive assistance will likely be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

In marginal agricultural areas, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are expected to persist through September driven by improved household food availability from the long rains harvests while None (IPC Phase 1) outcomes are expected to persist in parts of Meru North and Nyeri (Kieni). Carry-over food stocks from the above-average 2019 short rains season and the current harvests are expected to sustain household food access through October. Forage and water resources are expected to seasonally decline but remain available at sufficient levels, similar to outcomes in 2013, and support average livestock productivity, and milk production and consumption. Meanwhile, income from crops, milk, and livestock sales are expected to remain within average levels, sustaining good household food access through September.

The forecast below-average October to December short rains will likely reduce demand for agricultural waged labor through the cropping season and drive below-average household incomes. However, forage and water resources are expected to be near average despite the below-average rainfall due to the preceding above-average conditions from consecutive above-average rainy seasons. The combination of existing conditions and some rainfall will likely maintain livestock productivity and sale values from November to January at near-average to average levels. Household milk availability will likely remain at near average levels while household food stocks are expected to decline between October and early November, driving households to rely on market purchases. However, harvests from the unimodal high and medium production areas of the country are likely to sustain average to below-average staple food prices beginning in November. With near average household food access, most poor households are expected to meet their minimum food needs but are unable to purchase non-food needs due to reduced incomes, and likely face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes.

In pastoral areas, above-average rangeland resources are expected to maintain livestock productivity but to a lesser degree in Isiolo, Mandera, and Garissa where rangeland resources are declining. High goat prices and goat-to-maize terms of trade will facilitate household food access despite mixed food prices through the pastoral lean season from July through December. Livestock migration to dry-season grazing areas may occur in Tana River and Mandera counties where forage and water resources are expected to be depleted by October, which may provide herding labor opportunities for poor households.

The anticipated below-average short rains will drive below-average regeneration of rangeland resources but be mitigated by the existing atypical above-average conditions. Livestock productivity is expected to be below-average by early January 2021 and result in below-average milk consumption and income from milk sales. Reduced income from livestock sales is expected to be supplemented with income from self-employment activities like charcoal and firewood sales to purchase food. Below average remittances from urban areas will likely further constrain household incomes. From mid-November, the number of poor households facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes by engaging in livelihood coping strategies is expected to increase. Insecurity along the Mandera county and Somalia border is expected to hinder household food access and lead to area-level Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes from October 2020 through January 2021.
SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR

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, August to September 2020

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021

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.

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.