

Famine Early Warning Systems Network

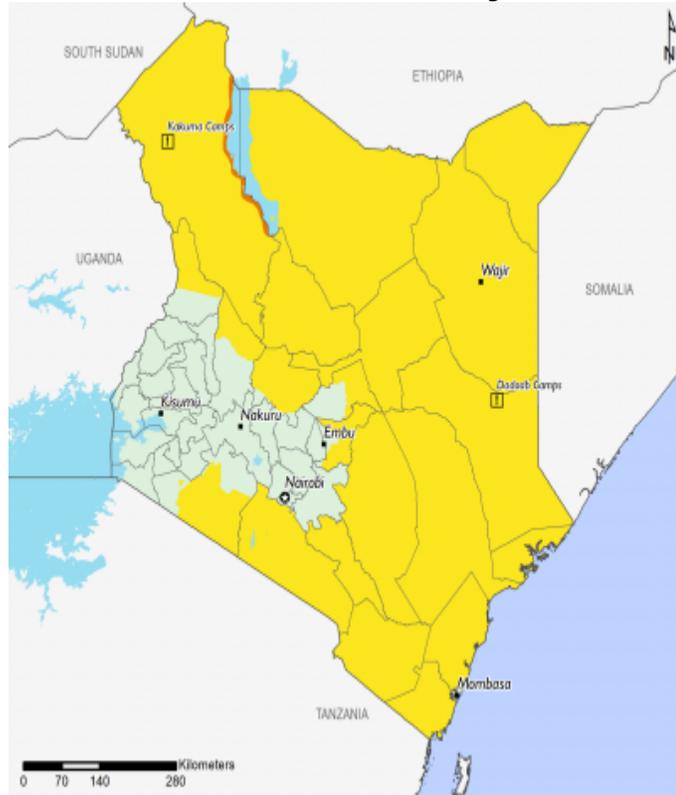
East Africa

Kenya

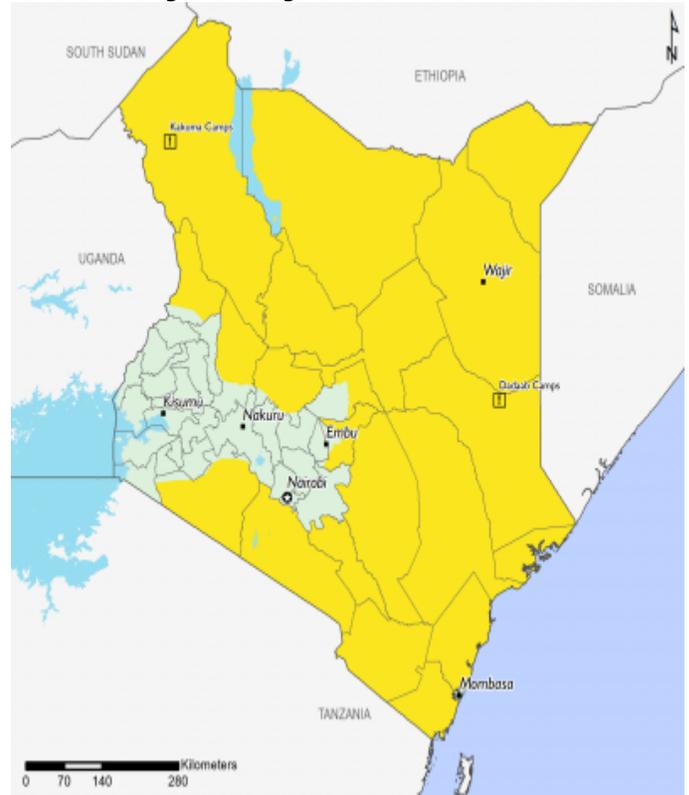
Key Message Update

Mixed short rains performance expected to drive below-average crop production

November 2020 - January 2021



February - May 2021



IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine
- Concentration of displaced people

Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance

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

November 2020

Key Messages:

According to satellite-derived rainfall data, the start of the October to December short rains has been mixed. Since October, rainfall in western, central, and eastern Kenya has ranged from 105 to over 145 percent of normal. However, in parts of the northwest, northeast, southeast, and coastal areas, rainfall has ranged from 55-70 percent of normal, with the most affected areas receiving less than 55 percent of normal rainfall. Cumulative rainfall is expected to be below-average in northeastern and parts of eastern Kenya and near average in northwestern and central Kenya. Poor temporal rainfall distribution is likely to negatively impact crop production.

In marginal agricultural areas, land preparation and planting of maize, beans, green grams, millet, cowpeas, pigeon peas, and potatoes is ongoing, providing labor income. Apart from the harvest of cassava and amaranth in Kilifi and mangoes in Tharaka Nithi, crops are in the germination to vegetative crop stages across most marginal areas. In Meru North, a late start to the rains forced farmers to replant. The late start of the short rains and reduced seed access could shorten the cropping season and drive below-average harvests. Declining household food stocks continue to drive increased market dependence among households and a gradual increase in prices; however, available labor income continues to stabilize household food security, maintaining area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes.

In pastoral areas, proxy satellite NDVI data from November 11-20 indicates that vegetation greenness is approximately 70 percent of the median in Wajir, Mandera, and Garissa, driven by seasonal degradation and below-average rainfall. However, across northern and western pastoral areas, average to above-average rainfall has maintained average to above-average vegetative greenness. Households continue to benefit from favorable goat-to-maize terms-of-trade (TOT), with average TOT in Turkana, Garissa, Wajir, and 20-40 percent above average TOT across other pastoral areas. The rains are expected to drive the short-term recovery of forage and water resources, improve livestock productivity and household food and income, and support area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes.

As of November 23, Kenya has 77,785 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 1,392 deaths. Following the rapid increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases since October 1, the government has emphasized stricter observation and enforcement of existing protocols and guidelines. This includes closing bars, restaurants, and other establishments by 9:00 pm; lengthening the curfew to 10:00 pm-4:00 am; suspending all political gatherings and rallies for 60 days; suspending all in-person basic education classes until January 2021; and the consideration of localized lockdowns in high-prevalence counties. Through December 2020, income-earning opportunities in affected sectors are expected to remain constrained, particularly in urban areas.

Acute food insecurity among poor urban households remains high, as COVID-19 restrictions such as the extended curfew and reduced business operating hours continue to impede labor opportunities and access to income. Despite near average staple food prices, the loss of income continues to limit urban poor household purchasing capacity and food access, driving a continuation of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes in Nairobi, Kisumu, and Mombasa, with the worst affected households in Mukuru and Dandora informal settlements of Nairobi engaging in coping strategies indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

In October, maize prices were 19-25 percent above average in Garissa, Mandera, and Kwale, driven by low market supplies from COVID-19 restrictions that continue to slow down the supply chain. In other markets, prices ranged from average to 25 percent below average driven by good local supply from the above-average 2020 March to May long rains production, unimodal production in the high and medium potential areas of the North Rift and Western Kenya, and cross border imports. Bean prices were average in Taita Taveta, Mombasa, and Meru, and 19 percent below average in Kisumu due to available supplies from the long rains harvests and neighboring markets. However, bean prices in other monitored markets ranged between 9-27 percent above average due to tightened supplies from below-average production.

Region Contact Information:

Email: kenya@fews.net

<https://fews.net/east-africa/kenya/key-message-update/november-2020>

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