Snapshot 11 - 18 March 2013

As the conflict in Syria entered its third year, intense fighting was reported across the country, in particular in Damascus, Homs, Aleppo, Idlib, and the area stretching between Damascus and the Golan Heights. The number of Syrian refugees continued to rise, amounting to a total of 1,129,019 as of 18 March.

French and African troops continued their offensive in the Adrar des Ifoghas mountains in northern Mali, where rebels have regrouped. Meanwhile, the risk of reprisal attacks remains high in the main northern towns and aid activities in parts of the north are limited due to insecurity.

In Central African Republic, an armed faction of the Seleka rebel coalition attacked Gambo and Bangassou, two southern towns on the border with the DRC in a continued breach of the recent peace accord. According to the UN, an estimated 1,500,000 people are estimated to be affected by the current crisis in the Seleka controlled areas, and have been without access to basic services for over two months.

Floods in Mozambique have cumulatively affected 478,892 people and displaced some 186,238 people as of 11 March, according to OCHA. The number of affected people has thus doubled from 243,671 people as of 22 February since the beginning of the rainy season in October 2012. The majority have been affected since...
AFRICA

BURKINA FASO FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

Burkina Faso has been affected by insecurity and the on-going military intervention in Mali. As of 3 March, some 47,871 refugees were registered with UNHCR in Burkina Faso. Between January 11 and February 22, more than 5,800 Malians fled to camps and spontaneous sites in Burkina Faso, primarily arriving from Bamako, Bambara Maoude, Daressalam, Douentza, Gossi, and Tomboutou. The refugees are residing at seven sites (Mentao, Damba, Fereiro, Goudebo, Gandafabou, Bobo Dioolasso, Ouagadougou) which are recognized as refugee camps by the Government, as well as at several spontaneous settlements.

The Government of Burkina Faso declared a national emergency on 1 March 2012 due to food insecurity and malnutrition which is affecting 2.8 million people. Prolonged drought, high food prices, displacement and chronic poverty are the main causes. However, according to official production figures of last season’s cereal production, from November to January, the total was close to 4.9 million metric, 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.

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 100,000 children <5 suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

Updated: 18/03/2013

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC FOOD INSECURITY, INSECURITY

According to the UN, an estimated 1,500,000 people (34% of the population) are estimated to be affected by the current crisis in the Seleka controlled areas, and have been without access to basic services for over two months. Since the beginning of the conflict in December, humanitarian access to the affected population has been significantly reduced due to physical and security constraints. Several UN offices and warehouses were looted during the rebel offensive in December, and the violence prompted temporary evacuations of humanitarian staff out of affected areas. As of May, access will be even more challenging due to the onset of the rainy season.

Since the beginning December, humanitarian access has been limited to 1/3 of Seleka controlled areas. The Séléka’s latest advance to the southern town of Bangassou has cut off humanitarian actors’ access to the southeast, affecting 300,000 people.

The Seleka rebel coalition of three rebel movements renewed its offense on 1 March when it attacked the northern town of Sido in an apparent breach of the recent peace accord. Fighters of the "CPJP Fondamentale" (the Convention of Patriots for Peace and Justice) crossed the border from Chad and attacked Sido.

On 11 March, fighters from the Central African Republic’s main Seleka rebel group attacked Gambo and Bangassou, two southern towns on the border with the DRC.

Seleka rebels had already threatened to resume fighting, accusing President Francois Bozize of failing to honour the peace deal. The insurgents said they were still waiting for the President to free prisoners and withdraw most of the foreign forces brought in to reinforce the army during the uprising. Despite a peace deal agreed between Seleka rebels and the CAR Government last month, rebels have maintained their control of the towns they seized at the start of an offensive on December 10. According to OCHA the Seleka coalition has begun establishing local authorities in Bria as of 4 March. The movement has appointed a prefect, a mayor and officials of the Customs services. Similar initiatives are likely to be launched in other Seleka controlled regions. The security situation is still worrying and attacks on civilians have been reported in the Mboki, Zemio and Obo regions.

The CAR Government has in contrast reported on 24 February that it will begin removing rebels from villages and towns they have occupied since December. The operation aims to re-establish freedom of movement for civilians in rebel-controlled areas. It will seek to identify the rebels, disarm them and reintegrate them into society, starting in the central regions of Bria and Kaga.

The Seleka took up arms against the Government on 10 December 2012. Seleka is accusing the Government of failing to honour the 2001 and 2007 peace deals under which fighters who laid down their arms were to receive compensation. This group took control of several towns across the country, including four prefecture capitals, and has advanced as close as 75 km from the capital Bangui.

In addition to conflict, CAR faces a food and nutrition crisis. In December 2012, OCHA reported an estimated 664,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance, primarily in Vakaga, Haut-Mbomou, Nana-Gribizi and Mboimou. A recent IPC seasonal analysis classified the entire country in either Phase 3 (stressed) or Phase 2 (crisis). In 9 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 northeast. In Bangui, WFP reports that food prices have risen by 29% in January possibly due to stores and markets closing in fear of looting and food becoming scarce with the main source of staples in Kaga Bandooro Dekoa, Grimari and Bambari seized by the rebels. Cereal prices are about 30% above the five-year average due to low market supplies according to FEWSNET. Already, the annual consumer price inflation had surged from...
Two years of continued climatic shocks, including erratic rainfall in 2011, caused significant food security concerns in 2012 into the beginning of 2013 in Chad. According to the UN, 1.8 million people are 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 Batna (25% GAM), Wadi Fira (22%), Salamat (22%), Beg (21%), and Kanem (21%).

However, good 2012/13 harvests have allowed very poor and poor households to replenish their food reserves and market prices across the country are stable and trending downwards. According to FEWSNet, food security conditions are steadily improving with the rebuilding of production capacity and the replenishment of livelihood assets. Nevertheless, structurally deficient regions will continue to face a shortage of grain.

Despite the good harvest, an estimated 126,000 children will suffer from severe acute malnutrition in 2013, according to UNICEF. Households have accumulated large debts during the lean period in 2012, which means that poor families have 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.

Southern Chad nevertheless suffered from significant crop losses due to major flooding. At the start of December 2012, 700,000 people were affected by floods following heavy rains in July and August. As a result of the floods, there is an increased risk of cholera.

On 18 February a yellow fever outbreak was confirmed by WHO in the town of Goz Beida, where 5,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived over the past two weeks as a result of recent tribal clashes in North Darfur. 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. Currently more than 288,450 Sudanese refugees reside in Chad.

Insecurity, particularly in eastern Chad and in certain areas in southern Chad, continues to limit humanitarian access.
African refugees in parts of North Ubang needing food and health assistance.

Nationwide, as of 31 January, over 2.6 million people were reported displaced as a result of fighting between the Congolese army and various rebel groups. An estimated 450,000 Congolese refugees are residing in neighbouring countries.

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. 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.

Humanitarian access has been limited due to mountainous and volcanic terrain, coupled with widespread and shifting insecurity. Tensions between the local population and international aid workers have escalated.

Updated: 18/03/2013

MALI CONFLICT, FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

French and African troops continued their offensive in the Adrar des Ifoghas mountains in northern Mali, where rebels have regrouped after losing control of urban areas in northern Mali. Meanwhile, the risk of reprisal attacks remains high in the main northern towns, in particular Gao and Kidal. Militants have carried out several attacks in the past weeks, using landmines, IED’s, suicide bombing attacks, and various guerrilla methods.

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 insecurity. The Douentza-Gao road has been opened but road traffic north of Douentza is discouraged. However, WFP and partners continue to supply the north of Mali from Niger.

The drawback of the French troops deployed in Mali has been postponed to April, a month later than initially planned. Troops from neighbouring African nations, including 2,000 Chadians, have been deployed to Mali and are meant to take over leadership of the operation when France begins to withdraw forces. In addition, the European Union has formally approved the launch of a 500-strong EU military mission to train the Malian army.

France’s involvement in the 12 month long conflict came after Islamist fighters moved to within 20 kilometres of Mopti, a strategically important town on the frontier between rebel-held and Government-held territories, taking control of the strategic town Konna on 10 December. With support from France’s armed forces, the Mali Government started a counter-offence on 11 January.

According to OCHA, there are 270,765 IDPs in Mali as of 15 March, compared to 227,206 as of 31 December 2012. In addition, UNHCR reports that as of 11 March, some 176,777 people have fled to neighbouring countries (around 75,000 in Mauritania, 54,000 in Niger and 47,000 refugees in Burkina Faso). This marks an increase of 33,919 refugees since the beginning of the year.

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.

The education of some 700,000 Malian children has been disrupted, and some 200,000 still lack access to school both in the North and South of the country, according to UNICEF. In the regions of Gao and Kidal, only 47,000 out of 217,000 students have access to education.

Recent assessments warn of a looming food security crisis in northern Mali. According to FEWSNet, food security will decline in the first quarter of 2013, with crisis levels (IPC Level 3) in large areas of the north by April. Shut down of key markets, restrictions on movements of people and food, and the beginning of the lean season are drivers behind this trend. As of January 2013, WFP estimates that 585,000 people are food insecure in northern Mali, with another 1.2 million vulnerable to food insecurity.

In total, an estimated 4.3 million people in Mali are in need of humanitarian assistance, according to OCHA. As of January 2013, WFP estimated that 585,000 people were food insecure in the north, with another 1.2 million vulnerable to food insecurity. According to FEWSNet, food security will decline in the first quarter of 2013, reaching crisis levels (IPC Level 3) in large swathes of the north by April. An estimated 660,000 children <5 will suffer from acute malnutrition in 2013, including 210,000 from severe acute malnutrition.

Updated: 18/03/2013

MAURITANIA FOOD INSECURITY

The number of Malian refugees has levelled off over the last weeks. As of 15 March, the total number of Malian refugees was to 75,109. Some 13,359 new arrivals were registered between 11 January and 22 February. 90% of Malian refugees are women and children. Hodh Ech Chargui hosts the majority of the Malian refugees fleeing armed conflict in northern Mali.

According to FAO, one million people are affected by food insecurity in Mauritania as of January 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.

Poor agro-dominant agro-pastoral 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, from 27 February an estimated 5,000 farm households (25,000 people) are already experiencing Stressed food security conditions (IPC Phase 2).
Potential threats to food security include an upsurge in locust activity, reported by the National Locust Control Center in Hodh El Gharbi, Tagant, Brakna, Tarzra, Inchiri, and Adrar, as well as high prices for millet, an essential dietary staple. However, sorghum prices in December 2012 were 17% below their levels of a year earlier.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**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 OCHA, 6.4 million people were affected by food insecurity in 2012, due to consecutive poor harvests, drought and rising food prices. According to FAO, there are currently some 3 million people food insecure nationwide, but the number is expected to decrease to 2.5 million in 2013, as a result of a surplus cereal harvest. However, recent estimations suggest that in spite of the nationwide production surplus, certain areas have experienced below-average harvests, particularly in Ayorou, Tillabéri, and Torodi departments where 700,000 people will be unable to meet their food needs without assistance, compared with the norm of 300,000 to 400,000 people in these areas.

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.

The number of Malian refugees residing in Niger has decreased from 62,000 Malians at the end of November to around 53,871 as of 15 March according to UNICEF. Some 2,451 new Malian arrivals were registered in Niger between 11 January and 6 February, with a decreasing trend over the past week. The refugees continue to place a large strain on the country with the large majority settling in the regions hardest hit by the nutrition and food security crisis. New arrivals are expected due to the on-going military intervention in Mali.

In the west of the country, more than 700,000 people were affected by flooding in December 2012, of which around 175,000 are displaced. The regions of Tillabéri and Dosso have been most severely affected. A surge in malaria and cholera cases was reported in most of the affected areas. As of 9 December, around 5,000 cholera cases have been reported (CFR 2.1%). In addition, 655 cases of measles have been reported in 2013, marking a significant increase compared to 341 cases during the same period in 2012.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**SOMALIA CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY**

According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), an estimated 1.05 million people in Somalia in need immediate humanitarian assistance. This marks a 50% decrease from 2.1 million in August 2012. Nevertheless, 1.65 million remain in stressed food security conditions and malnutrition rates in Somalia remain among the highest in the world.

The improved situation is linked to recent harvests which have resulted in improved access to food and declining market prices. The positive impact of the 2012 Deyr rains, as well as on-going humanitarian response, is expected to continue through the first half of 2013. Yet, regular seasonal deterioration of food security conditions, starting in early 2013, is expected with the onset of the long dry season. Climate predictions point towards abnormally hot and dry conditions in early 2013.

Although most livelihoods in Somalia are likely to be classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2), Critical to Very Critical nutrition situations (IPC Phase 3 and 4) are expected to remain in most IDP settlements in the north and central regions and in other parts of the south, north and central regions. The epicentre of the crisis continues to be in the south, largely due to the long-term effects of conflict, drought and famine, as well as the short-term effects of this year’s poor Gu rainy season. As a result of the lack of health infrastructure, poor feeding practices and possible outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea and measles during the April to June rainy season, 236,000 children <5 are expected to remain severely malnourished.

Results from the Somalia post-Deyr seasonal assessments carried out by the FSNAU and FEWSNET in December suggest that current acute food insecurity levels may be upheld from January to June. An estimated 1,346,000 million rural people are at the Stressed (IPC Phase 2), 127,000 in the Crisis (IPC Phase 3), and 108,000 in the Emergency (IPC Phase 4) phases of acute food insecurity. Nearly 80% of the nearly 1.34 million rural people in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) reside in southern Somalia and are only able to meet their food needs by compromising non-food expenditures.

Conflict remains widespread in Somalia. Military operations by Somali forces, supported by African Union peacekeepers, against militants forced a large number of al-Shabaab rebels from their strongholds in the southern and central regions. As a result of the food crisis and conflict, between 1.1 million and 1.36 million people are currently internally displaced according to UNHCR estimates. Another one million Somalis are living as refugees outside of the country.

Somali Government troops and African Union forces seized the formerly Islamist-held town of Burhakaba from the Al-Qaeda linked Shabaab fighters on 27 February. The capture of Burhakaba marks a key stage in efforts to open up the main highway from the capital Mogadishu running northwest to Baidoa, a major town wrested from the Shabaab by Ethiopian troops last year. Burhakaba lies some 160 kilometres (100 miles) northwest from Mogadishu, leaving some 60 kilometres (40 miles) unprotected until AU troops can reach Baidoa by road.

In February, humanitarian access remained challenging in most of southern and central Somalia. According to OCHA, four incidents against humanitarian personnel, or their assets, and three cases of interference of aid delivery were recorded in the reporting period – similar levels to the last three months where attacks on aid workers reduced from 13 in October to 4 and 5 in November and December, respectively. The Lower Shabelle region has been more volatile than the Middle Shabelle region, though access in both regions remains extremely challenging. The withdrawal of al-Shabaab from key towns in southern Somalia has permitted an increase in the international presence in some areas.
On 6 March, the UN Security Council decided to maintain deployment of the African Union Mission until 28 February 2014, reshuffle the UN presence there, and partially lift its 20-year weapons ban for one year to boost the Government’s capacity to protect areas recovered from Al-Shabaab and stave off fresh attempts by such groups to destabilize the country.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SOUTH SUDAN CONFLICT, FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

The South Sudanese army continued the military operation against insurgents loyal to rebel leader David Yau Yau, in Pibor County in the eastern Jonglei State, which was initiated on 5 March. The military operation is part of a wider disarmament campaign in the region ahead of the upcoming rainy season. The Government has called on civilians in the area to evacuate their villages and move into main towns to be better protected. On 6 March, over 2,500 civilians sought refuge at the UNMISS compound in Pibor, following brief clashes between the SPLA and an armed group. Efforts to reach out to Yau Yau as part of mediation in peace talks were unsuccessful at the end of last week.

South Sudan has struggled to assert control over remote territories awash with weapons after the 1983-2005 war with the north as well as characterized by ethnic rivalries. According to the UN, more than 1,500 people have been killed in Jonglei since the country’s independence.

Violence and cattle-raiding in South Sudan has affected some 23,350 people in Akobo East, Akobo West in Jonglei State and Ulang in Upper Nile since 8 February, according to inter-agency assessments and OCHA. Previous violence was reported during a cattle raid by rebels and ethnic allies in Akobo County in Jonglei State on 8 February, an incident that left at least 118 people dead and close to 10 people severely injured. The attack marked the worst violence in Jonglei State since South Sudan’s independence from Sudan in 2011. Related clashes in Dilúe Payam, Jonglei State, on 10 February caused the displacement of some 4,000 people. Another cattle-raiding incident in Gogrial East, Warrap State, on 23 February caused displacement of about 1,000 people and left about 23 people dead, according to OCHA.

Clashes between South Sudan’s army and militiamen broke out on 9 February in the volatile borderland between Sudan and South Sudan, according to the southern army. South Sudan accused Sudan of supporting the militia, and reported that the clashes had left at least 24 people dead. In separate clashes on the Sudanese side of the border, rebels from the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-North) accused a militia supported by South Sudan of having attacked a village, allegedly killing 17 people.

On 17 March, South Sudan reportedly began pulling out its army of the buffer zone on the border with Sudan as a step to set up a demilitarised area. South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir ordered the army to pull out on 11 March, following the extraordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Addis Ababa on 9 March. The meeting resulted in Sudan and South Sudan signing 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. The two states also agreed on an overall implementation plan with timelines for the coordinated implementation of all 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.

The influx of Sudanese refugees from North Kordofan and Blue Nile state continues, with over 204,000 Sudanese refugees currently present in South Sudan, primarily in Upper Nile and Unity state. Cases of Hepatitis E are increasing across refugee camps in Maban County, Upper Nile. According to the Ministry of Health and UNHCR, 6,000 suspected cases of Hepatitis E have been reported, of which 126 people have died as of 17 February.

Although favourable rains have improved the food security situation 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. Food insecurity is caused by a series of factors including diminished cross border trade with Sudan, inter-communal clashes, increasing number of IDPs, returnees and refugees, fuel scarcity and high food prices. Inflation rates nearly doubled, from 22% in October to 41% in November, according the South Sudan Bureau of Statistics. The cost of food increased by 43% in 2012 compared to 2011. However, sorghum and maize is estimated to be about 35% above the 2011 estimates and about 6% above the average of the previous five years. Planted area has increased in all states, except in Jonglei where more than 315,000 people have been displaced either by floods or by conflict with negative impact on planted area.

Insecurity, poor infrastructure and seasonal rains continue to severely hamper humanitarian access nationwide. A UN peacekeeper was shot and wounded by gunfire on 12 March in Jonglei State, and several humanitarian organisations have reportedly restricted their operations in the area in March. Over the course of 2012, there was a 48% increase in access incidents compared to 2011. The overall spike in access constraints is largely attributed to increased interference in humanitarian operations, hostilities and the physical environment. Inhibitable terrain also remains extremely challenging in South Sudan, with more than 60% of the country cut off during the rainy season.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SUDAN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC

Sudan and South Sudan agreed on 8 March to order their forces out of a demilitarised border zone by 14 March, possibly opening the way to the resumption of oil exports from the south. On 12 March, the Sudanese state news agency reported that Sudan’s armed forces have started to withdraw from a buffer zone on the border.

It was the first talks between the two countries in two months. On 9 February, fresh fighting erupted in Upper Nile, the volatile borderland area between Sudan and South Sudan. The Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan met on 5 January to discuss security, oil and border and the contested deals. On 27 January, the two Presidents committed themselves to implementing the cooperation agreement signed in September of last year. The Sudanese government reaffirmed its full commitment to the implementation of joint cooperation agreements signed by both Sudan and South Sudan last year, on February 27.
Localised violence and fighting between armed groups and the Government continue across Sudan.

**Darfur**

Clashes between the rebel group Sudan Liberation Movement led by Minni Minawi (SLM-MM) and Sudanese armed forces (SAF) erupted on 16 March in South Darfur allegedly killing more than 200 soldiers. The SLM-MM rebels said they attacked a government convoy near Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state. On 14 March, clashes were also reported in Bieelel.

On 2 March, the Beni Hussein and Northern Rezeigat tribes reportedly agreed to stop fighting following a reconciliation meeting in Saraf Omra. In addition, leaders of the two tribes have agreed to open all roads to El Sireaf in the Jebel Amir gold mining area. The parties have also agreed that the mining area should be under Government control and all mining activities should be suspended pending the outcome of a peace conference scheduled to take place on 15 April.

On 23 February, clashes between Bani Hussein and Rizeigat tribes erupted in El Sireaf in North Darfur, killing 53 people and wounding 83. In January, clashes between Reizeigat and Beni Hussein tribes in North Darfur have led to a mass displacement of 100,000 people, according to OCHA. The villages of Saraf Omra, Kabbabya and El Sereif are the most affected. In El Sireaf town alone, there are some 60,000 people who have sought refuge since early January due to the fighting between the Reizeigat and the Beni Hussein tribes according to OCHA.

Fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and an armed movement in the Jebel Marra area in Darfur, as well as conflict between some farmers and pastoralists in Masteri in West Darfur had displaced more than 15,000 people by end of January. Around 1.4 million displaced people live in camps across Darfur, dependent on aid rations, according to the UN.

Disputes over land ownership in South Darfur have allegedly led to violent tribal clashes that killed four people, wounded another seven and left six villages burnt on 28 February. Fighting ceased following the deployment of the Sudanese army to the area, but the situation remains tense and civilians were evacuated to nearby villages. According to OCHA, an estimated 7,000 people were displaced.

There are currently 37,500 reported Umbararo nomads in South Darfur who are unable to cross into South Sudan because the border between the two countries is closed. These nomads have settled in 13 locations in Tullus and Dimso localities.

Fighting also broke out between government forces and rebels in central Sudan, in a possible escalation of violence that has hitherto been concentrated closer to the African country’s borders. Rebels of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) from the western region of Darfur allegedly launched an attack on the army in North Kordofan state. JEM and two other Darfur rebel groups formed an alliance with a rebel group from southern Sudan, the SPLM-North, in 2011 to try to topple veteran President Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

On 11 February the Sudanese Government signed a ceasefire accord with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the main rebel group in Darfur.

**Blue Nile and South Kordofan States**

Fighting between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and SPLM forces in parts of Blue Nile and South Kordofan has affected an estimated 908,000 people since it started in June 2011. There is no humanitarian access to 420,000 people affected in rebel held areas in the two states. Fighting in South Kordofan has escalated in recent months with insurgents shelling the capital Kadugli. According to UNHCR, some 300 Sudanese refugees from South Kordofan cross the border to South Sudan daily.

As of 15 March, an estimated 4.3 million people are facing crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity in Sudan, according to OCHA. While 3.7 million people face Stressed and Crisis (IPC Phase 2 and 3) levels of food insecurity some 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 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. FEWSNET reported that 200,000-250,000 people in areas of southern Blue Nile and South Kordofan face Crisis and Emergency levels of food insecurity. Food insecurity will also remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels in conflict-affected areas in North Darfur in particular in the Jebel Marra and Jebel Amir areas currently affected by conflict until at least June 2013.

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 the outbreak of Hepatitis D in the state.

Nationwide, over two million people are currently displaced due to food insecurity and conflict.

*Updated: 18/03/2013*

**ANGOLA FOOD INSECURITY**

At the beginning of November, OCHA reported that more than 1.8 million people in Angola have been affected by a food security crisis, caused by a prolonged drought. The Ministry of Agriculture reported a 60% decrease of average rainfall over the planting season resulting in 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. Consequently, the possibility of outbreak of water related diseases is very high. 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 varying levels of malnutrition. At the same time, the country is still recovering from decades of civil war which lasted until 2002.

Updated: 18/03/2013

DJIBOUTI FOOD INSECURITY

On 25 and 26 February, Djibouti security forces clashed with opposition supporters in an attempt to disperse protests against the ruling coalition's parliamentary election victory. The police fired tear gas to disperse demonstrators demanding the release of Sheikh Bashir Abdourahim, a prominent opposition figure arrested on 25 February.

President Guelleh's Union for the Presidential Majority (UMP) declared victory in the election, claiming 49 of the National Assembly's 65 seats. The opposition rejected the vote as flawed and promised demonstrations. International observers however, reported no major incidents during the electoral process. Guelleh has effectively presided over a one-party state since coming to power in 1999. The opposition accuses the 65-year-old leader of mounting oppression against Djibouti's 920,000-strong population.

Several consecutive years of drought have led to a critical food security situation in Djibouti. Currently, some 150,000 people are affected by drought, of whom 70,000 vulnerable people are currently at Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity. The northwest pastoral zones are worst affected.

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 second semester of 2012.

Successive years of poor rains have also eroded the coping mechanisms of pastoralists in Djibouti's rural regions, even 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 of humanitarian needs in both rural and urban areas. As of 28 February there were more than 18,463 Somali refugees in Djibouti, of whom 211 have arrived since the beginning of 2013.

Updated: 18/03/2013

ETHIOPIA FOOD INSECURITY

Recent reports indicate that East and West Hararghe Zones in eastern Ethiopia have deteriorated into 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.

According to the Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD) released on February 28, about 2.5 million people are food insecure and need humanitarian assistance between now and 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. Below normal to normal March to May Belg/Gu/Genna/Sugum rains are forecasted over much of northeastern and southeastern regions. Poor rains in pastoral areas means 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).

With below average rainfall is already setting in since the beginning of March, this is already expected to have an impact on agriculture activities, as planting is nearing its close for the Belg season in parts of southern Ethiopia. Increasing water shortages are reported across the country. In Somali, immediate water trucking needs were identified. Some 720,500 people require water trucking as of 11 March.

The food security situation continues to be poor or deteriorating in parts of SNNP, Tigray, Somali, Oromia, eastern Amhara, and northern Afar Regions. The number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia as of 20 February stood at 231,327 with 3,654 new arrivals in 2013. The total refugee population has risen slightly by 1.3% to 381,722 refugees hosted in Ethiopia. The increasing rate of new arrivals is 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 not yet known as refugees in the area remain unregistered.

Updated: 18/03/2013

KENYA FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT, INSECURITY

Uhuru Kenyatta was declared winner with a narrow victory in Kenya's presidential election, securing 50.07% of the votes. Raila Odinga maintained that the election was marred by fraud, refused to concede defeat, and challenge the election results before the Kenyan Supreme Court on March 15. On the same day, police dispersed supporters of Odinga who had gathered in front of the Supreme Court to protest against the election results.

The elections on 4 March marked the country's first general elections since December 2007, when a disputed outcome led to serious violence that caused over 1,300 deaths and displaced around 600,000 people.

The Kenyan police issued alerts on 3 March of impending attacks, and there were reports of violence before the voting started. However the election has remained largely peaceful.
The number of food insecure in Kenya is likely to increase from the current level of 2.1 million due to the poor performance of the October-to-December Short Rains in parts of the south-eastern and coastal marginal mixed farming zones. Almost one million people are expected to face crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity through March, primarily in the south-eastern and coastal marginal mixed farming livelihood zones.

The long drought in late of 2012 was followed by heavy rains in the first two weeks of January, resulting in floods in the capital Nairobi, as well as Nyanza and North Rift Valley regions, since the parched land was not able to absorb the large volumes of water. The floods have resulted in devastation of large agricultural areas. Moreover, according to the UN, the floods resulted in 20 deaths and a total of 2,156 households were affected. In addition, as of January 29, a total of 13 people have lost their lives to mudslides in the North Rift Valley region and 765 displaced.

The influx of Somali refugees into Kenya continues, with 209 new arrivals since the beginning of January. According to the UNHCR, the total number of Somali refugees in the country amounts to 509,870. 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. Between November and December 2012, the number of children admitted to the MSF hospital for severe acute malnutrition doubled. 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.

MALAWI FOOD INSECURITY

Flooding in southern Malawi continues to affect the population. More than 1200 families are stranded in houses in the town of Chikhwawa alone – as heavy rains hit more than 110,000 people nationwide.

According to OCHA as of 15 February, the flooding had displaced some 33,000 people in southern Malawi. In total, 86,000 people have been affected by floods 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. Humanitarian access has been hampered by persistent rains resulting in the destruction of roads. More rainfall is expected over southern Malawi, which could exacerbate flood conditions, according to OCHA.

An estimated 2 million people are classified as food insecure, indicating a significant increase since June 2012. Some areas have experienced four consecutive poor harvests, indicating a deteriorating situation. As of 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 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. The national inflation rate continues to rise, with 33.3% price inflation in December. Historical seasonal trends indicate that maize prices will continue to climb until April 2013, when new supplies from the harvest will supplement market stocks. The persistent high maize prices prompted the Government to maintain a maize export ban.

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 Rumphi district of Mzuzu. This could further affect maize prices and availability.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SENEGAL FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

Nationwide, an estimated 739,000 people are affected by food insecurity in Senegal according to FAO. Preliminary results from a joint mission (Government/Action Aid/Senegalese Red Cross/FAO/WFP) carried out in late December 2012 show 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, and in the regions of Fatick, Kaolack and Kaffrine. 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, Saint Louis.

According to UNICEF, 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 has been 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. While 20,000 children were estimated to be severely malnourished in 2012, this number is expected to double in 2013.

Updated: 18/03/2013

ZIMBABWE FOOD INSECURITY, UNREST

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. Voters are expected to roundly back the constitutional revisions. Results of the vote will be announced within five days according to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission.
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 recent weeks, the police have 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.

Skirmishes between ZANU-PF and MDC supporters in Manicaland, 200km east of the capital, were reported. Police have announced a ban on the possession of shortwave radio receivers, saying they are used to communicate hate speech ahead of next month’s constitutional referendum and elections set to be held in July.

Heavy rains in January caused extensive flooding affecting some 8,490 people as of 15 February, according to OCHA. The worst affected provinces are Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Masvingo and Midlands. Though the rains are slowly subsiding, February is the peak of the rainy season and large areas remain under threat of major flooding. However, below-normal rainfall is forecast for the southern regions of Zimbabwe throughout the coming season. Despite recent heavy rains in most of the country, most districts in Matabeleland South province suffer from drought conditions.

The acute food security crisis in Zimbabwe is currently reaching its peak period with an anticipated 1.6 million people in need of food assistance in the period leading up to the April 2013 harvest, according to the UN. Late and erratic rains, poor agricultural practices, limited access to agricultural inputs, and a reduction in planted area have all contributed to a 33% decrease in the harvest in Zimbabwe compared to 2011. In the most affected areas maize prices are reported to be between 12% and 47% higher compared to prices in maize surplus areas. Prices of cereal and flour are likely to remain high compared to last year making food accessibility difficult for affected households.

Ongoing drought in the southern part of the country will continue into 2013 according to meteorological forecasts and is expected to further increase food security needs. Large numbers of labour-constrained individuals and decreased purchasing power has significantly contributed to the number of people who require seasonal targeted food assistance. A large percentage of vulnerable rural farmers still depend on NGO and Government-subsidized agricultural inputs. Poor weather patterns reduced the national cereal harvest by 33% this year. In light of this, food insecurity in Zimbabwe in 2013 is projected to be comparable worse than any period over the past three years. Almost one in five people living in rural areas will be unable to meet basic food requirements.

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. A recent armyworm outbreak threatens to exacerbate food insecurity levels. The outbreak has so far hit five of the country’s eight farming provinces, and is reported to have destroyed hundreds of hectares of the staple maize crop in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West and Manicaland, the country’s top food-producing provinces.

The full extent of the impact on overall agricultural production has not yet been assessed. 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.

Updated: 18/03/2013

CAMEROON FOOD INSECURITY

Some 400,000 people are affected by food insecurity due to production shortfalls in northern Cameroon as of 07 March, according to FAO.

A SMART Nutritional post-harvest season survey conducted in November and December in five regions of Cameroon show a prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) at 6.3% in Far North region 5.5% in North.

Widespread flooding in August to November 2012 in the North and Far North districts of Cameroon has exacerbated the food insecurity situation, with crops being destroyed. Some 88,640 (50,824 people in the North and 37,816 in the Far North region) were displaced, and the effects of the flooding continue to cause extreme hardship for the local populations.

Updated: 18/03/2013

MOZAMBIQUE FLOODS, EPIDEMIC

Floods in Mozambique have displaced some 186,238 people and cumulatively affected 478,892 people as of 11 March, according to OCHA. This represents a significant increase in numbers of affected population from 243,671 people as of 22 February since the beginning of the rainy season in October 2012. The majority have been affected since January 2013. An estimated 117 people have 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 is the most impacted 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 have been affected and 10,522 others temporarily displaced. A storm system has formed in the Mozambique Channel which has the potential of causing heavy rains across much of central and northern Mozambique exacerbating flood conditions, according to OCHA.

A cholera outbreak was confirmed on 8 February. In northern Mozambique 1,320 cholera cases have been reported, with five deaths, from 28 Jan to 7 March. As of 21 February, 413 cases and two deaths were reported in Cabo Delgado Province, northern Mozambique. Already endemic in the region, cholera could be exacerbated by the current floods. According to OCHA, in Gaza province there was a marked increase of cases of severe malaria requiring in-patient services/referral in Chokwe.

The last quarter of 2012 was considered relatively dry in Mozambique. However, recent heavy rains have not been absorbed by the dry land, leading to flooding of crop fields in southern and central Mozambique. An estimated 210,587 hectares of crops were damaged...
by the floods, mostly in the southern provinces, as well as in the central Zambezi Province. Although the area represents a comparatively small size at the national level, localised production losses will negatively affect food supplies in 2013. 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, Chôkwe and Funhalouro in the south.

However, despite the flooding, 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.

The country already suffers from high chronic food insecurity, affecting nine million people (39% of the population).

Updated: 18/03/2013

**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.

Eritrea is currently dealing with a locust infestation: according to FAO on the southern coastal plains of the Red Sea in Sudan, four small immature and maturing swarms and groups of adults were reported and treated near the border of Eritrea.

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 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.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**AFGHANISTAN  CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT**

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). In February, the wheat flour prices were 25% higher in compared with the same time last year and 26% higher compared to 5 year average price.

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. 18% of children <5 nationwide suffer from malnutrition, while acute malnutrition rates in the south are as high as 29.5% for children <5.

Deadly attacks on the civilian population as well as on national and international authorities continue. The surge in violence has raised the possibility that insurgents are increasingly focused on testing Afghan security forces in Kabul, and marks a change from the series of high-profile attacks on western targets last year. Several foreign and Afghan soldiers were killed on 11 March at a joint base in a so-called insider attack.

Humanitarian access has been increasingly compromised due to insecurity. January saw 27 security incidents involving humanitarian workers in 15 provinces of Afghanistan, driven by active hostilities and access constraints related to winter. An annual polio vaccination campaign in the remote Nuristan province was allegedly halted last week by Taliban forces.

The NATO-led force in Afghanistan said on 26 February that it had incorrectly reported a 7% drop in the number of attacks by Taliban insurgents last year, acknowledging that there had been no decline in the closely watched statistic. The accurate number for insurgent attacks in 2012 showed the assaults had remained at the same level as in 2011, at more than 3,000.

Around 85,000 international troops are currently supporting the Government in its fight against the Taliban. However, all international combat troops are preparing to withdraw by end 2014 and with over 75% of the country expected to be under national security control by July 2013.

Overall, 5.4 million people are affected by the on-going conflict. The displacement crisis in Afghanistan has over 450,000 people currently internally displaced. Since 2001, UNHCR...
has supported the return of 4.7 million Afghan refugees from neighbouring countries. However, nearly three million registered Afghan refugees remain in exile in Pakistan and Iran.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SYRIA CIVIL WAR

As the conflict in Syria entered its third year, heavy fighting was reported across the country in the past week. Anti-Government forces continued their offensive in Damascus, resulting in heavy fighting in outlying neighbourhoods of Damascus city. On 12 March, 30 army deserters were killed in an ambush at Damascus airport.

The situation in Homs severely deteriorated this week with intermittent shelling of the city centre and intensive clashes in Bab Amr, Karm Shami and Jouret Arayes.

Fighting erupted in an area between Damascus and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights on 13 March in what could be a new battlefront between Syrian troops and rebels. On 17 March, Syrian rebels reportedly seized a Syrian military intelligence compound in the southern Hauran Plain in the strategically important region.

In the northwest, clashes raged at Hish in Idlib province as regime forces fought to break the rebel siege on the Wadi Deif base, under rebel control since October last year.

Aleppo saw several airstrikes carried out near Minnigh air base and intensive fighting continued around Aleppo international airport. Over the weekend, clashes erupted between different Islamic factions in Aleppo city. There were also reports of airstrikes in the northern city of Raqqa, Quneitra and in Daraa in southern Syria. Approximately 200,000 Syrian have fled the city of ar-Raqqa to Dayr Azour following the ensuing fighting and insecurity in the area.

Clashes on 1-2 March resulted in insurgents seizing control of half of the northeastern Syrian town of Yaraabiya, including a border post with Iraq. These incidents raise concerns over the potential spillover of the Syrian conflict into neighboring Iraq and as a result, the Iraqi Government closed all official border crossings In addition, the Government of Syria threatened to respond to cross-border infiltrations from Lebanon into Syria.

A meeting of the Friends of Syria group in Rome on 28 February concluded with pledges of increased political and material support to the Syrian opposition, although without giving details on the kind of support that will be given. During a EU summit, Britain and France pushed for lifting the current arms embargo on Syria, to allow for the arming of anti-Government groups. The National Coalition plans to meet in Istanbul on the 19th and 20th of March to elect a prime minister for rebel-held areas of the country. On 10 February the Syrian National Coalition said that it is willing to hold talks with President Bashar al-Assad's representatives in rebel-held areas of northern Syria. The opposition Syrian National Coalition is willing to negotiate a peace deal to end the country's civil war under the provision that President Bashar al-Assad steps down and cannot be a party to any settlement. On 25 February, the Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualem said that the Government was ready to talk to the country's armed opposition, but did not indicate whether the government had any conditions for starting dialogue.

The massive influx of Syrian refugees into neighbouring countries continues with an average of 7,000 Syrian refugees arriving each day. This influx is putting enormous pressure on neighbouring countries. According to UNHCR, a total of 1,129,019 refugees have been registered or are awaiting registration by UNHCR as of 17 March, with 354,235 refugees in Jordan (Government estimates 420,000 in total), 357,394 in Lebanon, 260,000 in Turkey (Government estimates 400,000), 114,235 in Iraq and an 43,000 in Egypt (Government estimates 100,000). The actual size of the refugee population is believed to be much larger than as an unknown number of refugees are unable or unwilling to register. Large-scale displacement is resulting in over-crowded shelters and host communities' capacity to support is overstretched.

According to the UN, the death toll in the Syrian conflict has passed 70,000 people since the beginning of the conflict. The UN estimates that over four million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, and recent joint rapid assessment in parts of six northern governorates identified 3.4 million people in urgent need of assistance. Some 2.5 million people are internally displaced. Access to food remains limited due to increased prices and reduced availability. The prices of staple commodities have risen by 80% to 100% in some areas. WFP reported that they are unable to access more than one million out of 2.5 million people in need of emergency food assistance. According to FAO, Syria's wheat and barley production dropped from 4-4.5 million tonnes in normal years to 2 million tonnes in 2012 due to the on-going conflict. Waterborne diseases are on the rise, with an outbreak of Typhoid reported in the north of the country. WHO stated that shortages of life saving medicines are of major concern.

Humanitarian access remains limited, with assessments and relief operations being hampered by the widespread insecurity, violence against humanitarian personnel and impediments to entry. On 6 March Syrian rebels seized a convoy of 21 U.N. peacekeepers, who are part of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), which monitors the 1974 disengagement accord between Syria and Israel after their 1973 war, near the Golan Heights. The UN peacekeepers were released on 10 March.

Updated: 18/03/2013

YEMEN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY

Renewed clashes between Yemeni police and southern separatists killed two civilians and wounded six people on 13 March, five days ahead of the country's troubled national dialogue. The clashes erupted in Aden's Mansura district, a stronghold of the pro-independence movement. Police opened fire on Southern Movement activists who had blocked roads with rocks and burning tyres as part of a campaign of civil disobedience they began less than a month ago. Some 12 people have been killed since the protests began on 23 February.

The crackdown on the protesters has inflamed tensions in Yemen. Unrest intensified across southern Yemen last month when protesters marking the first anniversary of the ousting of former strongman Ali Abdullah Saleh clashed with police in Aden.

National Dialogue sessions are scheduled to meet on 18 March to start drafting a new
Yemeni constitution, agree on other reforms, and begin paving the way for elections. The constitution is expected to set out the groundwork for presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2014.

An estimated 13 million people (55% of the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance in Yemen, according to OCHA. 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. As a result, some 385,000 people remain internally displaced. In the south, more than 100,000 internally displaced people have returned to their areas of origin in Abyan governorate and further returns are on-going, according to UNHCR.

Yemen currently hosts more than 237,000 refugees, virtually all of of Somali and Ethiopian origin, according to UNHCR. The number increased significantly during 2012, which saw record high levels of new arrivals, amounting to 107,532 people in 2012. As of 31 January 7,518 new arrivals were reported, the majority of whom are (6,231 people) Ethiopian.

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).

According to WFP, the food security outlook for 2013 is slightly worse than in 2012, when an estimated 10.5 million people were considered food insecure. 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 of January 28, an estimated 13.1 million people lack access to safe water and sanitation. Epidemics are re-occurring, with 170 children having died from measles in 2012.

Information about humanitarian needs 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.

Updated: 18/03/2013

MYANMAR INTERNAL UNREST, FLOODS

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. They first hope to establish new boundaries to show which areas are controlled by government forces and by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).

Fighting between the Government and KIA had re-ignited in June 2011, when a 17-year ceasefire between the Government and 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.

Initial talks were held on 5 February in an attempt to end the conflict which re-escalated in December. The Government has allowed the UN and international aid groups to access all displaced civilians in war-torn Kachin State. The Government previously blocked international relief from reaching thousands of civilians in rebel-held areas.

Despite positive steps in the de-escalation of conflict over the past weeks, sporadic security incidents continue to be reported across Kachin state.

Meanwhile, 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. In May/June and October 2012, Rakhine State in Myanmar experienced wide-spread inter-communal violence between predominantly Muslim and Buddhist communities. By 24 December, between 115,000-138,000 people were still displaced across eight Rakhine townships (Kyaukpyu, Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Pauktaw, Ramree and Rathedaung).

The rice harvest in 2013 is expected to be significantly affected by heavy flooding at the beginning of September as the rains have inundated around 250,000 hectares of crops.

Updated: 18/03/2013

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

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.

On 8 March clashes broke out between Israeli security forces and Palestinian protestors in the West Bank and at a holy site in Jerusalem after the funeral of a Palestinian who died after being shot by Israeli soldiers during a confrontation two weeks ago. Some 35 protestors were wounded.

Clashes between Jewish settlers, Palestinians and Israeli soldiers had broken out in the occupied West Bank on 23 February. The clashes came a week after a wave of violent protests in solidarity with four Palestinian hunger-striking prisoners, coupled with the death of another Palestinian in detention. At least six Palestinian protestors were shot and badly wounded in the violence.

According to the OCHA December 2012 Food Security Assessment reports, people having lost an income source due to the conflict in November will need several months or years to replace it, and as a result may need to be supported by longer-term emergency food assistance.
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: 18/03/2013

PAKISTAN CONFLICT, FLOODS

A bomb blast inside a Sunni Muslim mosque on 9 March killed five people and wounded 28 others in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar. Peshawar is vulnerable to bomb blasts and Taliban attacks as it runs into the semi-autonomous tribal belt, considered a safe haven for Taliban, Al-Qaeda and other insurgents fighting both in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The attack comes six days after a car bomb killed 50 people in a mainly Shiite Muslim neighbourhood of Karachi, the fourth in a series of major attacks on the minority Shiite community since January 10 that have killed more than 250 people.

Continued attacks by insurgency groups are fostering an increasing trend of violence in Pakistan since December 2012. On 16 February, a bomb attack in Quetta in the Baluchistan Province in southwest Pakistan left at least 64 people dead and some 200 injured. The group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi claimed responsibility for the attack. Baluchistan has increasingly become a flashpoint for sectarian violence between Sunni Muslim and Shi'ites.

Pakistani Shi'ites agreed to bury those killed in the most recent sectarian bombing, ending four days of protests, after the Government said on 19 February that it had arrested 170 suspects linked to the attack.

Pakistan's parliament is due to dissolve in less than two weeks in preparation for elections, but rising sectarian violence has raised serious questions about security.

Insecurity remains fragile in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and in Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal belt on the Afghan border in the northwest, where Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants have carved out strongholds. The recently escalating violence has raised fears of a renewed Taliban campaign that could threaten the upcoming national elections.

Government operations against non-state armed groups as well as sectarian violence have caused significant population movement since July 2008. According to OCHA, more than 758,000 people remain displaced in KP due to protracted conflict as of 31 January.

Flash floods triggered by heavy rains in September caused destruction across Pakistan. According to the Government, the flooding affected around 4.8 million people in Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh provinces as of 31 January, with around 142,000 people now residing in camps. 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. The winter season is further causing a deterioration of the humanitarian situation, particularly for those residing in makeshift shelters.

Malnutrition rates in some flood affected districts were beyond emergency thresholds before the current floods and are predicted to worsen. In addition, 60% of the population in Pakistan is food insecure and inflation, with rising fuel prices and stagnating domestic productivity 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 current floods. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 141 measles outbreaks throughout the country since the beginning of the year. The HO has described the situation in Pakistan as alarming due to a steady increase in measles cases and deaths.

Assessments and humanitarian operations are hampered by difficult access due to insecurity, standing flood waters, and visa delays. Attacks against aid workers in Pakistan 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.

Update: 18/02/2013

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 2,381,800 people are classified to be 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, by end 2012, by 12 % higher than in last season.

In Tajikistan, which heavily depends on import, prices of wheat flour remained stable or showed some declines in December 2012, though still 33% higher than a year earlier. During 2012 an increase in food prices was recorded on other staple food products such as potatoes (by 19 %), beef (by 15%), bread and other staple products. Transportation and fuel prices have contributed to the surge of food prices.

High prices are likely to continue and place pressure on vulnerable families to meet food needs due to high and increasing prices in Kazakhstan and as households deplete their own stocks and rely more on market purchases.
**BANGLADESH INTERNAL UNREST**

Clashes and violence in Bangladesh continued over the past week, following the sentencing to death of a senior Islamist leader on 28 February. On 12 March, members of the opposition alliance led by BNP staged a hartal (or strike) in Dhaka that resulted in clashes between security personnel and protesters. Violent attacks against Bangladesh’s minority Hindu community have been reported to continue over the past week, with around 50 Hindu temples and at least 700 Hindu houses attacked since late February. More than 86 people have died due to the violence since 28 February.

The clashes on 28 February, when an estimated 34 people were killed in clashes in 15 districts across the country, marked the bloodiest session of violence since the country’s independence four decades ago.

Demonstrations over the trial and sentencing of senior political leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) party, the country’s largest Islamic party, including the party’s leader and deputy leader over their role in the 1971 independence war, have resulted in numerous clashes between the police and protesters since January. In addition to the violence, hartals called by the JI or the main opposition political party (BNP) are reportedly causing significant disruption to business and commerce. The war crime court is set to deliver its next verdict against Jamaat's spiritual leader who headed the party during the war of liberation sometime next week or early next month. With elections scheduled for late 2013 there is concern that the political disruption will continue.

Some 40% of the population is food insecure and this is aggravated by rising food prices and disasters destroying infrastructure and inundating land. Bangladesh is considered one of the world’s most hazard prone countries and is often subject to floods. In 2012, the affected north-western region was hit by floods three times.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**IRAQ DISPLACEMENT, INSECURITY**

This week has seen continued attacks in Iraq, claiming the life of at least 42 people. On 14 March coordinated blasts killed at least 25 people in an attack on the Iraqi Ministry of Justice in central Baghdad near the heavily fortified Green Zone, where several Western embassies are located. The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), an umbrella group for al Qaeda-linked Sunni Muslim insurgents claimed responsibility for the attacks. Eight more people were killed in the capital on 15 March in an attack on police recruits. On 17 March nine people were killed in a car bomb in Garmat Ali in Iraq's predominantly Shi'ite Muslim south.

The violence is a continuation in the surge in unrest that left 246 people dead in January, of food imports and increased demand from new arrivals from Syria.

On 1 March, Iraq's Sunni Finance Minister resigned, after more than two months of demonstrations against the Shi'ite-led Government. Iraqi authorities said the Minister's bodyguards had confessed to involvement in assassinations carried out in coordination with security men employed by Sunni Vice President Tareq al-Hashemi, who fled into exile a year ago and was later sentenced to death in absentia for terrorism. Tens of thousands of Sunni Muslims have taken part in demonstrations. The rallies were sparked by the arrest on December 20 of bodyguards of Iraq's Finance Minister and have spurred allegations that the Government was using anti-terror legislation to target the Sunni minority.

As of 13 March, the number of registered Syrian refugees in Iraq was at 114,235 with the autonomous region of Kurdistan hosting the majority of refugees. Measles has been reported amongst new arrivals in Domiz refugee camp. In addition, a large number of Iraqis residing in Syria have returned to Iraq. As of 22 January, the total number of Iraqi returnees from Syria since mid-July 2012 was 68,122, according to UNHCR. Baghdad continues to receive the largest number of Iraqi returnees, followed by Anbar and Ninewa.

On 3 March, Iraq shut a border crossing with Syria after Syrian rebels seized the other side of the frontier post from the Syrian army. On 11 March, Al-Qaida's branch in Iraq claimed responsibility for the killing of 48 Syrian soldiers and nine Iraqi guards in western Anbar province, who sought refuge in Iraq after the attack on the border post. The attack suggests possible coordination between the terror network's Iraq affiliate and its ideological allies in Syria who are fighting on the side of the rebels against President Bashar Assad's regime.

An estimated 1.2 million were displaced inside Iraq by 11 June 2012; updated displacement figures remain lacking. Although humanitarian access has become less restricted, security threats for international staff remain high, particularly in Baghdad, north-central governorates and the Disputed Territories.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**JORDAN FOOD INSECURITY**

The number of Syrian refugees crossing the border to Jordan continues to increase. As of 18 March, 298,025 Syrian refugees have been registered by UNHCR in Jordan, and an additional 56,210 await registration. Since the beginning of 2013, more than 120,000 Syrian refugees are estimated to have crossed the border into Jordan.

These figures do not include Syrians that have not registered or await registration, and the government of Jordan estimates that there are in total some 420,000 Syrian refugees in the country. As a result of the refugee influx, Jordan’s economy, water and energy resources remain strained. The prices of commodities are higher in Jordan compared to Syria and the purchasing power of the refugees to cover basic needs is rapidly 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.

Updated: 18/03/2013

**KYRGYZSTAN FOOD INSECURITY**

Updated: 18/03/2013
In March an estimated 25% of the population of Kyrgyzstan - about 1.3 million people – is considered to be food insecure compared to 18% in March 2012. The highest levels of food insecurity were found in Jalalabad (48%), Osh (38%) and Batken (38%) oblasts. 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. A WFP assessment from September 2012 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 February 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 48% in urban areas, and by an average of 52% across the country. The domestic retail price of wheat flour in February was 32% 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.

Updated: 18/03/2013

PHILIPPINES CONFLICT, FLOODS, TYPHOON

Following the large-scale air and ground assault launched by Malaysian security forces against the Filipino Muslim supporters of Sulu Sultan Kamalul Kiram III in Sabah on 5 March, fighting has reportedly continued over the past week. According to Malaysian Police, 61 of the intruders as well as eight police officers and a soldier have died since violence first erupted in mid-February. The Sultan of Sulu demands of Malaysia to recognize him as the rightful owner of Sabah, and to renegotiate the terms of the 1963 lease. An ultimatum to withdraw forces unconditionally has been issued to the intruders by both the Government of the Philippines and the Malaysian Government but they refused to leave.

This conflict is Malaysia’s worst security crisis in years and a continuation of the standoff could affect up to 800,000 Filipinos living in Sabah, who are at risk for potential harsh treatment and/or mass deportation.

Continuous rains have caused floods in Agusan del Sur in the Province of Pampanga since last week. Some 49,073 people are 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.

On 19 February, Tropical Depression “Crising” made landfall on the southern tip of Davao del Sur and moved northwest towards southern Palawan before moving away from the country on 21 February. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Control (NDRRMC), some 52,325 households, or 262,880 persons, were affected in 137 barangays of seven regions. 39,406 of these were previously affected by Typhoon Bopha. As of 25 February, 223,134 receive assistance inside and outside of evacuation centres.

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.

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 13 February, 6.2 million people were still affected by Bopha, 925,412 people are displaced outside evacuation centres and 8,925 are displaced inside evacuation centres. A total of 233,163 households were totally or partially damaged. Humanitarian access to those affected is hampered by the remoteness of the affected areas, heavy rain, as well as the wide-scale impact.

Previously, tropical storm Wukong (Quinta) made landfall over the island of Leyte on 26 December, resulting in the displacement of estimated 60,000 people. As of 31 December, more than 240,000 people were affected by the tropical storm. Flood-affected towns in Capiz were placed under state of calamity on December 28.

The affected region of Mindanao is still recovering from four decades of conflict between the Government and rebel groups fighting for independence.

On 27 November 2012, the Department of Health reported over 3,700 dengue cases since 1 January 2012, which is a 45% increase compared to the same period last year. A 1.15% Case Fatality Rate (CFR) has been recorded, with the highest CFR in General Santos City.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SRI LANKA FLOODS

Heavy rain and flooding in Sri Lanka at the beginning of January has affected 355,000 people with 50,000 displaced as of 28 January. The rain and floods hit six of the country’s nine provinces. The worst affected districts are Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa, Puttalam and Kilinochchi.

Flooding and heavy rains are common in Sri Lanka: by the end of November, 210,000 people were affected by floods and landslides and 137,000 people were affected by cyclone ‘Nilam’ in October.

Just prior to the November rains, much of the country had been hit by a 10-month-long drought with 1.3 million people facing (severe) drought conditions in the north of Sri Lanka. This area is recovering from a civil war which lasted until 2009 and left more than one million people food insecure.

Updated: 18/03/2013

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

In response to the country’s third nuclear test after 2006 and 2009, the U.N. Security
Council voted on 7 March to tighten financial restrictions on DPRK and crack down on its attempts to ship and receive banned cargo in breach of U.N. sanctions. On 11 March DPRK cut off a Red Cross hotline with South Korea and the tensions escalate. Pyongyang has also threatened to cut off a hotline with U.N. forces in South Korea, at the border “truce village” of Pammunjom in a reaction to the newest round of sanctions.

European Union Governments agreed on 18 February to tighten sanctions against North Korea, restricting the country’s ability to trade following the recent nuclear test. The sanctions expand those approved by the UN Security Council in January, adding measures preventing trading in North Korean Government bonds, gold, precious metals, and diamonds, EU diplomats said.

The UN Security Council unanimously approved a resolution condemning DPRK’s long-range rocket launch in December. The announcement was met by DPRK with vows of strengthening military capacities and nuclear deterrence in January.

According to WFP, some three million people are estimated to face food deficits and remain vulnerable to under nutrition in five provinces in the north-east of the country.

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. However, acute malnutrition rates seem to have improved this year due to better food rations and a consistent food assistance pipeline. 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.

DPRK still requires international assistance. Flooding and a subsequent typhoon in July and August 2012 further 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: 18/03/2013

Some 2.1 million people in Haiti are severely food insecure and risk a nutritional crisis, according to the UN. An estimated 81,600 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). Projections of the food security situation indicate that the poor and very poor in some municipalities in the Sud-est, Ouest and Nord-est departments will enter IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) between January and March 2013. 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.

Since the start of the cholera outbreak in October 2010, the cumulative number of cases amounts to 645,964, with 118,000 potential new cholera cases in 2013. As of 19 February, 8,020 deaths have been reported. According to the Ministry of Public Health and Population, approximately 8,643 new cholera cases and 126 deaths were reported between 15 December 2012 and 15 January 2013. This represents a 40% decrease over the previous month but still represents a 65% increase over the same period last year. Artibonite department is most affected with 817 new cases of cholera (compared to 619 new cases for the same period in December) recorded during the first two weeks of January, due to contamination of rivers, unhygienic conditions and inadequate sanitation.

Torrential rain caused by Hurricane Sandy led to massive flooding, affecting 1.5 million people. Ouest, Sud-Est, Nippes, Grande-Anse and Sud were provinces most affected by Hurricane Sandy. As of 15 February, 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 the 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 358,000 IDPs in Haiti.

Updated: 18/03/2013
OCEANIA

SAMOA CYCLONE

On 13 December, flash floods and power cuts hit Samoa as tropical cyclone Evan struck the island-state with high winds and heavy rain. Close to 17,000 people were affected. On 14 December, the Government declared a state of disaster, which expired on 21 January. Substantive damages to power lines, roads, infrastructure and homes have been reported, and the Alao area could be without water for up to four months. In addition to a disruption of water and sanitation schemes, livelihoods and crops and plantations have been severely affected. South-West, Central and Southern parts of the central highlands on Upulo Island were worst affected.

The International Monetary Fund has indicated that the country’s economy will be as hard hit as it was by the tsunami in 2009.

Updated: 18/03/2013

SOUTH AMERICA

BOLIVIA FLOODS

Torrential rain has been causing damage along the Pacific coast of South America. According to Bolivian authorities, as of 11 March, some 21,500 families, or 107,500 people, are affected by rains and floods in 67 municipalities from eight of the nine departments of the country. To date, some 24 people were killed due to floods. The southern departments are the most affected, especially Chuquisaca, Potosi, Tarija and Cochabamba. In La Paz, more than 4,120 families are affected in 26 municipalities, some 1,160 hectares of crops are damaged and several roads are blocked. In Cochabamba, floods have affected more than 1,140 families in seven municipalities and more than 990 hectares of crops have been damaged.

In addition, according to the Government of Bolivia, recent assessments of the floods in the tropics of Cochabamba indicate that some 7,144 households are affected in the towns of Villa Tunari, Puerto Villarroel and Chimoré.

Bolivia experiences floods every year during the January-March rainy season. Heavy rains typically flood major rivers and cause mudslides and devastation of roads and infrastructure in the Andean region, and the Amazon lowland plains consistently suffer from floods every year during the rainy season.

Updated: 18/03/2013
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 ongoing 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.


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 ongoing 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.