

# KENYA

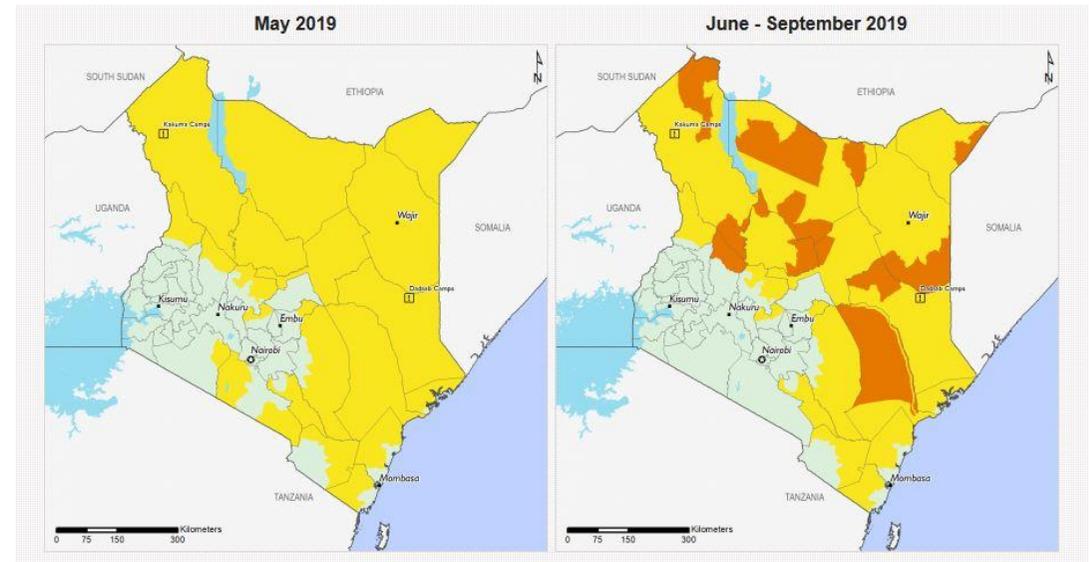
## Drought

Kenya is currently experiencing a prolonged drought largely as a result of below average precipitation from the seasonal short rains (October-December) and long rains (April-June). Prevailing dry conditions across the Horn of Africa have led to the deterioration of farmland and pastures, loss of livestock, sharply increased food prices, and reduction of the availability of water, in Kenya as well as Somalia, Ethiopia and Uganda. Food, livelihood, WASH, health, and protection needs are present, particularly in Kenya's pastoral zones in the north and northeast, and are expected to increase in the coming months with the continuation of the 2019 lean season through September.

### NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE



### IMPACT



Source: (FEWS Net 31/05/2019)

## Anticipated scope and scale

The Kenyan government has identified ten counties, mostly in northern and northeastern Kenya, as being particularly affected by the drought: Wajir, Mandera, Garissa, Marsabit, Turkana, Baringo, Kilifi, Samburu, Tana River and West Pokot. **Drought conditions are expected to persist** into the coming months and the **number of severely food insecure people is expected to increase to 2.5 million by July 2019**, up from approximately 1.1 million at present. Many affected areas have a high level of underlying vulnerability linked to recurrent exposure to droughts that have taken place in recent years.

## Key priorities



**1.1 million**  
severely food insecure



**+500'000**  
need treatment for malnutrition



**Livelihoods**  
severely impacted

## Humanitarian constraints



Humanitarian access remains relatively unconstrained in most drought-affected counties across Kenya. In Mandera, ongoing insecurity connected to Al Shabaab may generate localized challenges for the delivery of assistance.

### Limitations

Significant information gaps make it difficult to obtain a complete picture of the impact of the drought. A detailed breakdown of needs by sector is largely unavailable. There is a lack of information regarding how needs have evolved over time, particularly for sectors other than food security.

## Crisis impact

Kenya has been facing drought conditions since the end of 2018 after receiving below average precipitation from the seasonal short rains (October-December). In 2019, the delayed onset of the April-June long rains in 2019 has further exacerbated the effects of the drought. Across the country, cumulative rainfall is at least 20% below average, with some areas having rainfall deficits of 50-75% below average (FEWS Net 31/05/2019). Persistent dryness has contributed to the deterioration of farmland and pastures, loss of livestock, sharply increased food prices, and reduced availability of water. Intercommunal tensions have also increased as a result of heightened competition for land and other resources (DW 28/05/2019). The areas most affected by drought are primarily in north and northeastern Kenya, including: Wajir, Mandera, Garissa, Marsabit, Turkana, Baringo, Kilifi, Samburu, Tana River and West Pokot (Government of Kenya 21/05/2019).

Despite humanitarian response efforts, significant needs for food, livelihood support, WASH, health, and protection are present in drought-affected areas. Vulnerability to the present drought is significantly increased as a result of the fact that it comes slightly more than a year after a severe drought that affected the Horn of Africa in 2016/17, which degraded local coping capacities (FAO 03/06/2019). As Kenya enters the lean season in June, humanitarian needs are expected to escalate significantly beyond the scope of usual seasonal variation, and up to 2.5 million people may fall into severe food insecurity by July 2019 (WFP 30/04/2019).

**Food:** Drought conditions have led to an estimated 50% decrease in agricultural production reducing the availability of food for households. The price of staple food products has been increasing, which will likely further restrict the ability of households to acquire food from market sources. In Kisumu, Mombasa, and Nakuru the market price of maize is 35-50% higher than last year largely as a result of lower production and farmers keeping their crops for personal consumption (FAO 03/06/2019). Overall, 1.1 million people are estimated to be severely food insecure, as of April 2019. This figure is predicted to increase by July 2019, when approximately 2.5 million people are expected to face severe food insecurity (WFP 30/04/2019). A majority of counties will be in IPC 2 (stressed) or IPC 3 (crisis) through September, with needs particularly acute in pastoral areas (FEWS Net 31/05/2019)

**Livelihoods:** The drought will likely have a severe and potentially long-term negative impact on the livelihoods of farmers and pastoralists. Pastoralist livelihoods have been impacted by the death of livestock and reduction of suitable land for grazing. Livestock prices have decreased significantly as animals lose weight from a lack of pasture, with the average price of goats in some areas going from 3,000 shillings to 500 shillings (Daily

Nation 17/03/2019). This has a direct negative effect on the income of herders. In counties where agriculture is the main livelihood activity, reduced crop production will almost certainly lead to a decline in household income.

**WASH:** Between March and April 2019, the average distance travelled to obtain water for households increased in most drought-affected counties, indicating an overall decrease in access. According to government authorities, this trend is primarily explained by the drying of rivers and other surface water sources (Government of Kenya 21/05/2019). In counties such as Turkana and West Pokot, a shortage of potable water has forced households to rely on water transported by truck to meet their consumption needs (Al Jazeera 25/03/2019).

Since January 2019, approximately 1,200 cases of cholera including four deaths (CFR, 0.3%) have been reported across Narok, Kajiado, Nairobi, Garissa and Machakos counties (WHO 01/04/2019). These cases are primarily caused by the contamination of water sources and some are reportedly linked the ongoing drought (IFRC 04/04/2019). If drought conditions continue, the risk of waterborne disease will increase.

**Health:** More than 500,000 under-5 children in arid and semi-arid (ASAL) counties are in need of treatment for malnutrition. Out of this total, the caseload of severe acute malnutrition is approximately 113,000 (UNICEF 31/03/2019). Malnutrition can be expected to increase as long as drought conditions persist. In northern Kenya past severe droughts, such as in 2016/17, have historically caused malnutrition rates to double (FAO 03/06/2019).

So far, no new outbreaks of infectious disease have been reported that are directly caused by the drought, though an elevated risk for diseases such as typhoid fever, AWD, and measles remains present (FAO 03/06/2019).

**Protection:** Drought has increased the risk of negative coping strategies that lead to protection concerns, such as child marriage and labour, school dropout and family separation (FAO 03/06/2019). Previous droughts in the Horn of Africa have placed women and girls at an elevated risk of experiencing gender-based violence (Action Aid 22/03/2017).

## Vulnerable groups affected

Pastoralists who lost most or all of their livestock during the 2016/17 drought have an elevated baseline level of vulnerability to food insecurity and will likely have fewer coping strategies at their disposal to deal with the effects of the present drought. Children face an elevated risk of protection concerns such as child marriage and labour, which are likely to become more common in times of food insecurity (Action Aid 22/03/2017).

Children are also particularly affected by food insecurity as a result of drought. In previous droughts that have affected Kenya and neighbouring countries in the Horn of

Africa, more than half of the total deaths have been among children under the age of five, as a result of malnutrition and other causes (The Guardian 26/03/2014).

## Humanitarian and operational constraints

Humanitarian access throughout most of Kenya remains relatively good, though in Mandera county, ongoing insecurity connected to Al Shabaab may make it more difficult for humanitarian actors to deliver assistance to populations in need. Periodic clashes between the Kenyan military and Al Shabaab have taken place in recent months, mostly concentrated near Kenya's border with Somalia (Xinhua 04/06/2019; Critical Threats 05/10/2018).

## Aggravating factors

### Upcoming Lean Season

The upcoming lean season in drought-affected areas is expected to cause food insecurity to increase beyond the seasonal variations that are typically observed. The 2019 lean season, which usually last from August to November in Northern and Eastern Kenya, is expected to start earlier in June and last longer than average as a result of prevailing drought conditions (FEWS Net 04/2019).

### Previous droughts

Kenya has suffered from numerous droughts in recent years notably in 2004, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2014, and 2016, which have severely degraded local coping capacities. The most recent severe drought took place in 2016/17 and triggered widespread livestock deaths and negatively impacted agricultural production. As a result of livestock deaths during the 2016/2017 drought, pastoralist households have fewer animals in their herds which under normal circumstances could be sold as a coping strategy and source of income (FEWS Net 21/05/2019).

### Local Conflicts

Several months of drought conditions have reportedly led to increased tensions over land in some counties such as Samburu (New Humanitarian 06/05/2019). As pastoralists are forced to move farther and farther in search of pastureland and water for their livestock, there is an increasing risk that they will come into conflict with farmers and landowners and there has already been reports of sporadic violence (Kenya News Agency 22/05/2019). Experience from past droughts suggests that there is a risk that violence might escalate if drought conditions continue. In 2017 several dozen people were killed and injured

when drought prompted herders to move tens of thousands of cattle onto privately owned farms and ranches in Laikipia (Business Day 03/12/2018).

## Key characteristics

Demographic profile: Total population of Kenya: 47,615,739, of which 26.5% is urban and 73.5% rural.

Poverty rate: The national poverty rate in Kenya is 45.9%.

Food security figures: 1.1 million people in Kenya are currently severely food insecure. 2.5 million people are expected to be food insecure by July 2019.

Nutrition levels: In arid and semi-arid areas in Kenya, more than 500,000 are in need of treatment for malnutrition, of whom approximately 113,000 are estimated to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) (UNICEF 31/03/2019).

Health statistics: In Kenya, the infant mortality rate is 37.1 deaths/1,000 live births. The maternal mortality ratio is 510 deaths/100,000 live births.

WASH statistics: In Kenya, 63.2% of the total population has access to improved drinking water. 56.8% of the rural population has access to improved drinking water. 30.1% of the total population and 29.7% of the rural population has access to improved sanitation facilities.

Lighting and cooking sources: In Kenya, the main lighting sources are tin lamps (38.5%), lanterns (30.6%), and electricity (22.9%).

Literacy levels: 78% of the population over 15 can read and write.

Sources: World Factbook 2018, Worldbank 2018, Knoema 2018, HumData 2018, SID 2013, UNICEF 02/03/2018, IPC 28/02/2018, WFP 30/04/2019

## Response capacity

### Local and national response capacity

A number of actors affiliated with the Kenyan government have been mobilised to provide assistance to drought-affected communities including the ministries of agriculture, water, and devolution (The Star 10/04/2019). The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) has played an important role in coordination. Among other forms of assistance, the Kenyan government has been transporting food and water by truck to drought-affected areas. The extent to which national response efforts are able to meet humanitarian needs remains largely unknown. So far, a state of emergency has not been declared.

### International response capacity

UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations are present in many drought-affected areas and are responding to the crisis. Along with government partners, international humanitarian actors are providing assistance in the form of food, cash, and support for WASH and livelihoods activities, among others (USAID 31/05/2019; Islamic Relief 20/02/2019). In April, IFRC launched an appeal for funding to increase its response activities in drought affected communities (IFRC 04/04/2019). WFP has requested USD 21 million for the next six months to respond to food needs in Kenya, including needs arising from the drought (WFP 30/04/2019).

### Population coping mechanisms

Some of the most prevalent coping mechanisms in drought-affected areas include reducing food consumption, skipping meals, borrowing money, and engaging in casual labour to supplement income from farming and pastoralism (Government Kilifi 30/04/2019; Government Mandera 30/04/2019). Among pastoralist households, selling livestock has also been reported. If the lean season continues as predicted there will likely be an elevated risk that drought-affected households may engage in more negative coping strategies, including early marriage (IFRC 04/04/2019).

## Information gaps and needs

A number of significant information gaps are present concerning:

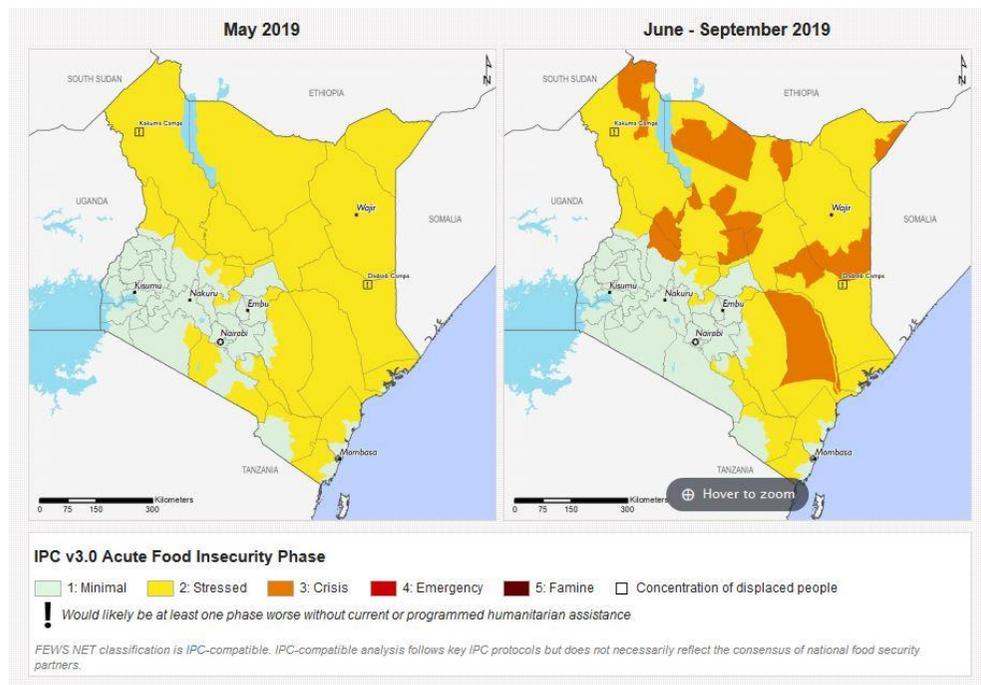
- The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and the relative severity of need.
- Detailed information about different priority sectors of humanitarian need.
- Information about how needs have evolved over time since the beginning of the drought.
- Disaggregated data by gender, age, and disability.

## Lessons learned

- The most drought-affected areas of Kenya are also those where poverty rates are higher. Therefore, an adequate response to droughts and food insecurity must also address underlying vulnerabilities, in addition to meeting more urgent humanitarian needs (Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery 2014).
- Past droughts in Kenya have often been associated with largescale displacement of pastoralists, who move from their place of origin in search of pastureland for their livestock. During the 2016/2017 drought, approximately 60,000 herders crossed from Turkana county to Karamoja, Uganda (DW 18/04/2017). If food insecurity and drought conditions persist, displacement linked to the crisis may increase.
- Repeated exposure to drought can have a negative long-term impact on households and communities which goes beyond their immediate survival needs (Digital Standard 03/06/2019). Many drought-affected areas would likely benefit significantly from programmes supporting livelihoods and resilience to future droughts.

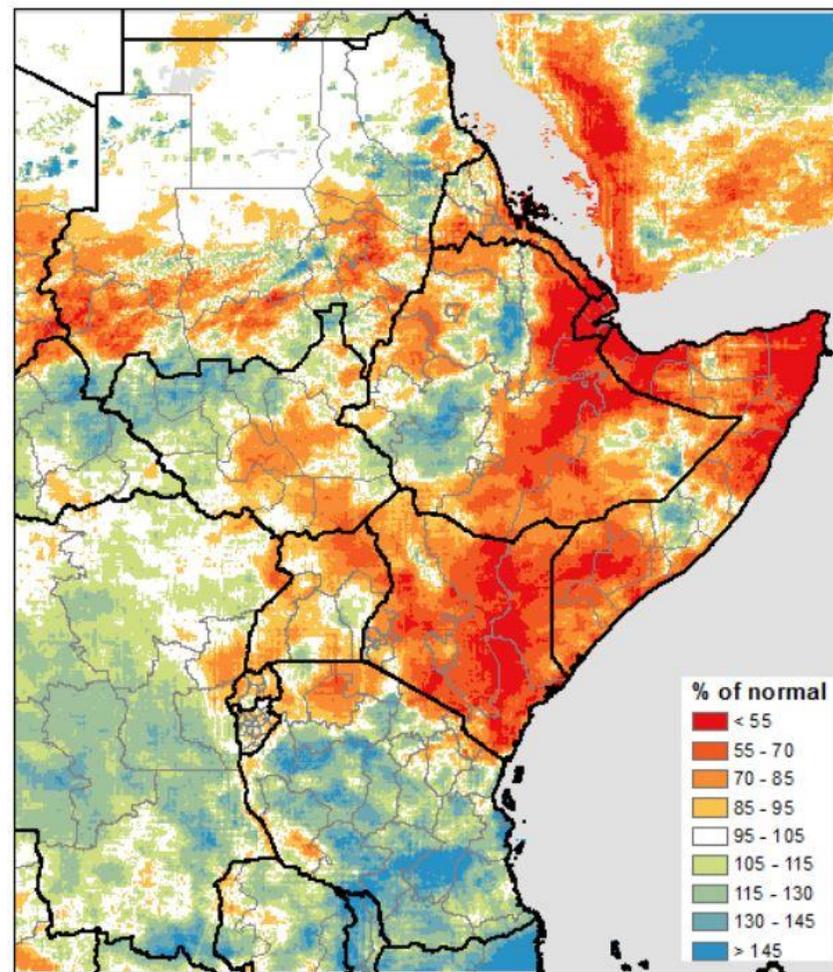
## Maps

### IPC Phase Classification



Source: (FEWS Net 31/05/2019)

### Seasonal Rainfall Totals, Percent of Normal (1 March – 20 May)



Source: CHIRPS version 2.0 *prelim*

Map produced by USGS/EROS



Source: (FAO 03/06/2019)