A combination of severe flooding, dry spells, insecurity, disease and pests, the economic crisis, the effects of COVID-19, limited access to basic services and the cumulative effects of prolonged asset depletion and loss of livelihoods continues to drive food insecurity across South Sudan.

Objectives

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is working with partners in the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster to:

- Enhance food consumption, dietary diversity and coping strategies for vulnerable households to prevent famine.
- Strengthen emergency food production through agricultural, livestock and fisheries inputs and support.
- Reduce dependency on food and agricultural inputs to improve households’ ability to absorb shocks.

Activities

**Improve agricultural production**
- Distribution of main season agricultural seeds and tools | fishing, vegetable and crop kits | expansion of cash for seeds and voucher schemes for seed fairs | seed security and multiplication | support to market functionality | distribution of fishing and vegetable kits as part of integrated rapid response mechanism during lean season

**Improve animal health and reduce plant pests and diseases**
- Livestock treatment and vaccinations | livestock disease surveillance | training of community-based animal health workers | animal health kits | cold chain | common animal disease prevention | fall armyworm and desert locust surveillance and control | local capacity development

**Provide food and nutrition support**
- Nutrition vouchers | support to backyard gardens | farmer and agropastoral field schools | training in income generation | vocational training

**Deliver livelihood assistance and strengthen absorptive capacity**
- Cash for work | local biomass briquettes and fuel-efficient stoves | risk communication | restocking of small livestock | conservation and marketing of agriculture, fishery and livestock products/by-products | livelihood diversification | income-generating activities

FAO requires USD 90 million without immediate and unrestricted humanitarian assistance to curb the severity and spread of the food crisis, over 7 million people – more than half of South Sudan’s population – are likely to slip into crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity at the height of the lean season, from April to July 2021.

To assist 6 million people

**FAO in the 2021 humanitarian appeals | South Sudan**
The current food security situation in South Sudan is alarming. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis from December 2020 indicates that between October 2020 and July 2021, five counties have populations facing catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) levels of acute food insecurity – one step below famine. Even more alarmingly, some payams in Pibor County are classified as in a “famine likely” situation, in which starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical acute malnutrition levels are all apparent.

Unprecedented flooding for the second consecutive year has exacerbated the vulnerability of agropastoral communities, having led to low crop and livestock production, conducive conditions for animal disease outbreaks, such as Rift Valley fever, increased livestock mortalities, market disruptions and livestock and population displacement. Further, the looming threat of desert locusts persists as current predictions suggest that the pest may return in 2021. This could further undermine the coping capacities of millions of people.

Urgent and essential measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 have worsened economic conditions, disrupting livelihoods and affecting vulnerable households’ access to markets, food and adequate income. Further impacting households’ purchasing power is the 80-fold increase in the cost of the minimum expenditure basket since 2014.

Despite the establishment of a transitional unity government in February 2020, which reignited hope of sustainable peace, intercommunal conflict continues to devastate the country resulting in the loss of lives and assets, displacement, restricted access to food and disrupting income-generating activities.

The scale and severity of food insecurity in 2020 remains the highest on record since 2014 and the risk of matters deteriorating further in 2021 is of serious concern. However, South Sudan’s hunger situation can improve in the coming months through scaled up, sustained and adequate multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance as well as a robust main agricultural season response.