



GLEWS Country Brief

The Republic of South Sudan

Reference Date: 17-September-2025

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Risk of famine in two counties of Upper Nile State
- Cereal production shortfalls expected to affect the performance of the 2025 cropping season
- Cereal prices at exceptionally high levels due to macroeconomic challenges

Risk of famine in two counties of Upper Nile State

According to an update of the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, about 7.7 million people (57 percent of the total population) were estimated to face IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or worse levels of acute food insecurity during the lean season between April and July 2025. This figure is almost 10 percent higher than in the same period of the previous year, mainly due to a deepening economic crisis, resulting in soaring food prices and heightened violence since early 2025. The highest prevalence of severe acute food insecurity, ranging between 66 and 85 percent, was reported in Unity and Upper Nile states and among the 666 000 South Sudanese returnees from the conflict-affected Sudan. Concern exists for about 83 000 people facing IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) levels of acute food insecurity, including 12 000 people in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, 32 000 people in Upper Nile State and 39 000 returnees from the Sudan. In particular, there was a risk of famine in Nasir and Ulang counties in Upper Nile State, where armed clashes destroyed livelihoods, disrupted food trade and marketing activities, and triggered large scale displacements.

The main drivers of the dire food security situation are protracted macroeconomic challenges resulting in high inflation, insufficient food supply, the lingering impact on livelihoods of consecutive years with widespread floods, several and increasing episodes of violence and a sustained influx of returnees.

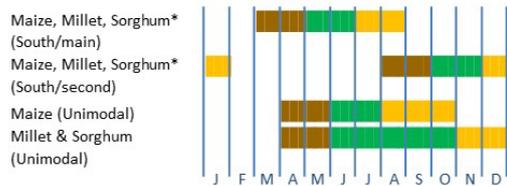
Cereal production shortfalls expected to affect the performance of the 2025 cropping season

In southern bimodal areas, harvesting of the 2025 first season maize and sorghum crops concluded in August. Although seasonal rainfall amounts were below average, they were adequate for crop growth and the cereal output is estimated at average levels. Planting of the 2025 second season crops, for harvest in late 2025/early 2026, is underway. Above-average rainfall amounts in August benefited planting and germination of

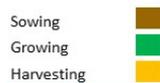
South Sudan

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Lean period



South Sudan

Cereal Production

	2019-2023 average	2023	2024 estimate	change 2024/2023
	000 tonnes			percent
Sorghum	773	867	960	10.7
Maize	117	141	157	11.3
Rice (paddy)	32	36	38	5.6
Others	6	6	6	0.0
Total	928	1 050	1 161	10.6

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

South Sudan

Retail prices of maize and sorghum

South Sudanese pound per kg



early-planted crops. Weather forecasts point to above-average rains in most of these areas between September and December, with likely positive effects on yields.

In northern and central unimodal rainfall areas, harvesting of short-cycle sorghum and maize crops has recently started and will conclude in October, while long-cycle sorghum crops will be gathered from November 2024 to January 2025. The May-October rainy season has been characterized by below-average rainfall amounts in May and June, which affected vegetation condition in several cropping areas. Subsequently, above-average precipitation amounts in July and August improved vegetation conditions and lifted crop prospects. Weather forecasts point to above-average rainfall amounts until October, likely benefiting yields. However, in some areas of Upper Nile and Jonglei states, where the early season rainfall deficits have been substantial, the improved rains in July and August were insufficient for a complete recovery of crops and cereal production shortfalls are expected.

The abundant rains received in July and August exacerbated already widespread flooding caused by the overflow of the River Nile and its tributaries. The extent of the flooded areas, which is already larger than the near-record levels of last year, is expected to peak in late 2025 and it might reach the record levels of 2022. However, crop losses are expected to be only localized as in 2024, since most crops were already mature when floods occurred from July onwards and hence less vulnerable to flood damage.

A deterioration of the security situation since early 2025, resulting in disruptions to agricultural activities in some areas, is expected to result also in localized crop losses.

Cereal prices at exceptionally high levels due to macroeconomic challenges

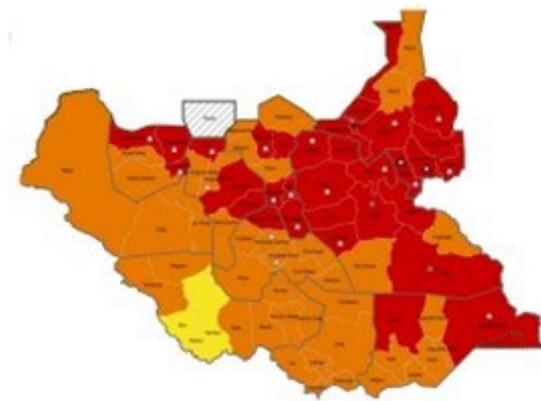
In the capital, Juba, prices of maize and sorghum almost quadrupled between October 2024 and June 2025. Seasonal patterns were compounded by the continuous depreciation of the national currency, which underpins cereal prices as imports cover a considerable share of the requirements. Cereal prices began to surge in March 2024 following a sharp depreciation of the national currency, mainly caused by a substantial reduction of oil exports due to damages to the pipelines passing through the Sudan. During 2025 oil exports partially resumed, but revenues were still insufficient to finance expenses, and the South Sudanese pound continued to depreciate. Prices of maize and sorghum declined between June and July by 37 and 11 percent, respectively, as the beginning of the first season harvest in southern bimodal areas increased market supply and the exchange rate firmed up, limiting the upward pressure on cereal prices. As of July 2025, prices of maize and sorghum were almost three times and almost four times, respectively, their already elevated year-earlier values.

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:
 FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS)
<https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/>.
 FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool
<https://fpma.fao.org/>.

South Sudan - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

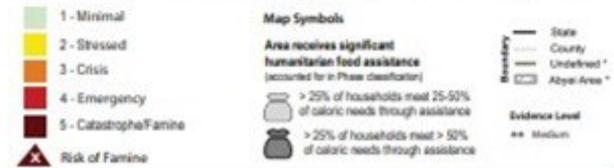
Updated Projection on April – July 2025



Key for the Map

IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

Mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population



FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring

<https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/>.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) <https://www.ipcinfo.org/>.