

IPC Talking points – DSRSG/RC/HC/RR, Eugene Owusu

20 February 2017

1. At country level, the food security and nutrition situation has been escalating since 2014 as the drivers (violent conflict and macro-economic failure) remain unaddressed. The crisis is purely man-made as the country has not been affected by natural disasters – except drought in a limited south-eastern area bordering Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.
2. IPC countrywide population figures in Phase 3, 4 and 5 are projected at 5.5 million by July 2017 (lean season) – i.e. 50% of the population – with widespread rising acute malnutrition.
3. The SS IPC TWG produced the Communication Summary with projection to July 2017. As requested by the IPC TWG, the IPC global Emergency Review Committee (ERC)¹ has reviewed the classification in the critical area of central-southern Unity - Koch, Mayendit, Leer and Panyijiar counties. The Northern Bahr el Ghazal area was excluded from the ERC review due to lower level of risk of famine as a result of scaled up humanitarian assistance – which must be maintained to prevent any deterioration.
4. Since 2014, the area has been affected by protracted violence, insecurity, displacement and protection failure that has prevented adequate humanitarian access and aid delivery.
5. Based on the parameters described in the IPC Famine Guidance Note, the SS IPC TWG concurred with the ERC conclusions as follows:
 - a) The SS IPC TWG concluded to declare Famine (IPC Phase 5 - for at least 20 % of the population) for both the current and the

¹ The committee consists of a 4-6 member team of leading international technical food security and nutrition experts, who are perceived as neutral to the IPC outcome and who have the relevant technical knowledge and experience in the specific crisis context. The committee reviews and debates the IPC evidence and results and then provides guidance and recommendations to the IPC Country Technical Working Group (IPC Country TWG) on this review. The ownership of the IPC results and responsibility of the release of the results remains with the IPC Country TWG and the Country Team.

projection to July for Leer County. This is supported by the ERC's professional judgement and available evidence: acute malnutrition >30% GAM, total livelihood asset loss and insufficient plans for humanitarian delivery and indicators point at Phase 5 for over 20% of the population. However, mortality rates are estimated based on mass MUAC screening – a good predictor of imminent under-5 mortality. Unfortunately, mortality could not be confirmed by direct measurement due to inaccessibility.

- b) The SS IPC TWG concluded to declare an Elevated Likelihood that a Famine is happening currently and could continue through July in Koch County. This means that Famine cannot be confirmed nor disproven due to limited available evidence. This conclusion is based on available qualitative evidence and inference on slightly old data. Unfortunately, the indicators could not be confirmed/updated due to lack of access.
- c) Following the same process, the SS IPC TWG has also projected a Famine (IPC Phase 5 for at least 20 % of the county populations in Mayendit, Leer and Koch from February to July 2017.

6. The ERC urges the responsible stakeholders to secure humanitarian access and ensure respect of humanitarian space in Koch, Mayendit, Leer and Panyijiar counties, as Famine can only be prevented if humanitarian assistance is scaled up and reaches the intended beneficiaries. Although the priority for humanitarian actors should be response, improved humanitarian access may also allow data collection in order to better understand the magnitude of the phenomena.
7. Based on the ERC Conclusions and Recommendations, the SS IPC TWG further deliberated and adopted the recommendations of the ERC in the meeting on 15 Feb as indicated in Step 2 in the table below.
8. The IPC TWG Chair and Deputy Chair, both GRSS technocrats, confirmed that the GRSS endorsement is expected through NBS – possibly on Monday 20 February.
9. FAO, WFP, UNICEF and humanitarian partners have conducted massive and timely interventions in 2016. As a result, the effects of very powerful structural deficiencies and failures have been mitigated in most areas.

However, access and delivery in central Unity have been inadequate to prevent Famine.

10. Sustained humanitarian assistance is to be maintained in the first semester of 2017 in most areas to contain the seasonal deterioration. In Koch, Mayendit, Leer and Panyijiar it is imperative to immediately deliver large volumes of assistance in order to reverse the escalating Famine.

11. The regional crisis is affecting availability of food commodities: commercial imports into South Sudan will further reduce as traders have no economic incentive due to domestic monetary collapse – or seek for premium profit pushing retail food price upwards that few households can afford. Also, the regional food aid pipeline may be affected.

SS IPC TWG Conclusions highlighted in Yellow

Area	Period	Classification according to the ERC Conclusion - step 1 – available evidence	Classification according to the ERC Conclusion - step 2 – professional judgment
Mayendit County, Unity State	Current: January	IPC Phase 4! <i>(Famine has been avoided by Humanitarian Assistance)</i>	Classification under step 2 not required
	Projections: February - July	IPC Phase 5 <i>(Famine is likely to happen)</i>	Classification under step 2 not required
Leer County, Unity State	Current: January	Elevated Likelihood that Famine is happening	IPC Phase 5 <i>(Famine)</i>
	Projections: February - July	Elevated Risk of Famine	IPC Phase 5 <i>(Famine is likely to happen)</i>
Koch County, Unity State	Current: January	Elevated Likelihood that Famine is happening	Classification under step 2 not required
	Projections: February - July	Elevated Risk of Famine	Classification under step 2 not required
Panyijiar County, Unity State	Current: January	IPC Phase 4 <i>(Emergency)</i>	Classification under step 2 not required
	Projections: February - July	Elevated Risk of Famine	IPC Phase 4! <i>(Famine will likely be avoided by Humanitarian Assistance)</i>
Aweil East, NBeG State	Current: January	ERC review not necessary (IPC Phase 4 or below)	Classification under step 2 not required
	Projections: February - July	ERC review not necessary (IPC Phase 4 or below)	Classification under step 2 not required