



PRESS RELEASE

Looming Food Insecurity Amid Triple Threat

50.6 Million people projected to be Food Insecure by the end of 2020

For immediate release

4 August 2020 (DJIBOUTI, Djibouti): The compounding impacts of COVID-19 global pandemic, desert locust invasion, ongoing climatic shocks (including floods), conflict and insecurity, adverse macroeconomic shocks, together with protracted food insecurity from past shocks, could lead to a food security crisis in the IGAD region. Following an analysis by the technical experts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an estimated **50.6 million** people in the IGAD region (approximately 20% of the population) are at risk of being food insecure and may require food assistance by the end of 2020 if urgent action is not taken. Before the current triple crisis, Eastern Africa was already considered one of the most food insecure regions of the world, with nearly 28 million people in need of food assistance.

The *IGAD Food Security and Nutrition Response Strategy* which was launched today calls upon Member States and Partners to provide technical and financial support to IGAD to implement a series of short-term interventions to deal with the unfolding crisis due to the triple disasters by:

- Supporting humanitarian and livelihood assistance for all vulnerable populations in pastoral, urban and rural areas;
- Improving and sustaining nutrition security among all vulnerable groups of people during food crises;
- Promoting and facilitating regional trade and cross-border access to markets;
- Enhancing regional multi-hazard response coordination and advocacy to address challenges brought about by disease outbreaks, desert locust invasion and climatic shocks;
- Strengthen safeguarding mechanisms for pastoralists and pastoral areas;
- Operationalizing the IGAD disaster response fund; and
- Establishing a regional operations center for emergencies.

"Nearly 50.6 million people are projected to be food insecure by the end of 2020 in the IGAD region. With millions of vulnerable populations at risk, IGAD has taken a stance to curb the casualties. This strategy puts in place guidelines for a coherent approach to supporting our citizens and the region. We call on Member States and partners to work together to provide political, technical and financial support to IGAD in the implementation of this comprehensive

regional strategy. Together we can preserve life." said Dr Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary.

Media requests

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Key facts

- Before the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the food security situation, an estimated 28 million people were food insecure (IPC Phase 3 or worse) in the IGAD region requiring urgent humanitarian assistance;
 - The region hosts over 8 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and 4 million refugees and asylum seekers, all these require food and non-food assistance;
 - The desert locust invasion is estimated to affect approximately 2 million people across the region, depriving them of their primary sources of food, and rendering them food insecure;
 - 2.5 million people have been affected by Floods across the region during the March to May season 2020.
 - More rains are forecasted in the northern parts of the region between [July and September](#) 2020, which could result in more flooding.
 - An estimated 21.4 million people in the region are anticipated to become acutely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 or worse) due to the economic impacts of COVID-19 pandemic throughout this year. This has impacted mostly the urban poor, rural poor, and households dependent on informal sectors for their food and income sources.
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