



# Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) Framework

Since February 2004, FAO, through the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) Somalia, has been developing the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) - a tool for improving analysis and decision making in emergency situations.

The IPC tool is a standardised scale that integrates food security, nutrition and livelihood information into a clear statement about the severity of a crisis and implications for humanitarian response.

The **IPC Reference Table** (See Figure 1 on the next page) provides details of the main phase categories: (1) *Generally food secure* (2) *Chronically food insecure* (3) *Acute Food and livelihood crisis* (4) *Humanitarian Emergency* and (5) *Famine/ Humanitarian catastrophe*.

*The rationale for the IPC is to provide:*

- **Technical Consensus and a Common Language:** The framework helps build consensus by providing a common language for classifying the severity of diverse crisis scenarios and their impact on human lives and livelihoods. It builds on and complements on-going global efforts to standardize core elements of humanitarian analysis and response e.g., the SMART, Benchmarking, Needs Analysis Framework, Humanitarian Tracking System and Sphere Project.
- **Clearer Early Warning:** The framework promotes timely and meaningful analysis to ensure that early warning information influences decision making and does not go unheeded. Hazard and vulnerability are accounted for and incorporated into risk statements. Three levels of risk are operationalised i.e. *alert, moderate* and *high*.
- **Strategic Response:** The IPC supports more effective response strategies by linking information with a strategic response framework. The IPC not only references criteria for defining the severity of a given crisis, but also explicitly links a statement to appropriate responses for addressing both immediate priorities and medium to longer term requirements. This allows for a consideration of what responses are most appropriate and feasible in different scenarios in the light of, for example, local capacity and ongoing interventions.

## Application of the IPC: Somalia

The IPC consists of a core Reference Table and supporting components including:

**Analysis Templates:** To organise key pieces of information in a transparent manner and facilitate analysis for substantiating a Phase Classification and guiding response analysis.

**Cartographic Protocols:** A set of standardized mapping and visual communication tools which effectively convey key information concerning situation analysis in a single map.

**Population Tables:** To consistently and

effectively communicate population estimates by administrative boundaries, livelihood systems and livelihood zones.

The two main elements of the IPC consist of a **situation analysis** and a **response analysis**.

**Situation analysis** is a critical yet often overlooked stage of the food security-analysis response continuum. Situational analysis is the basis for identifying fundamental aspects of a situation (severity, causes, magnitude, etc.). Ideally, the analysis is backed by a broad-based consensus among key stakeholders

including governments, UN and NGO agencies, donors, the media and target communities.

**Response analysis** explicitly links situation analysis to the design of appropriate strategic food security interventions. It aims at bridging the gap between needs assessment and decision making by promoting a broad range of responses including:

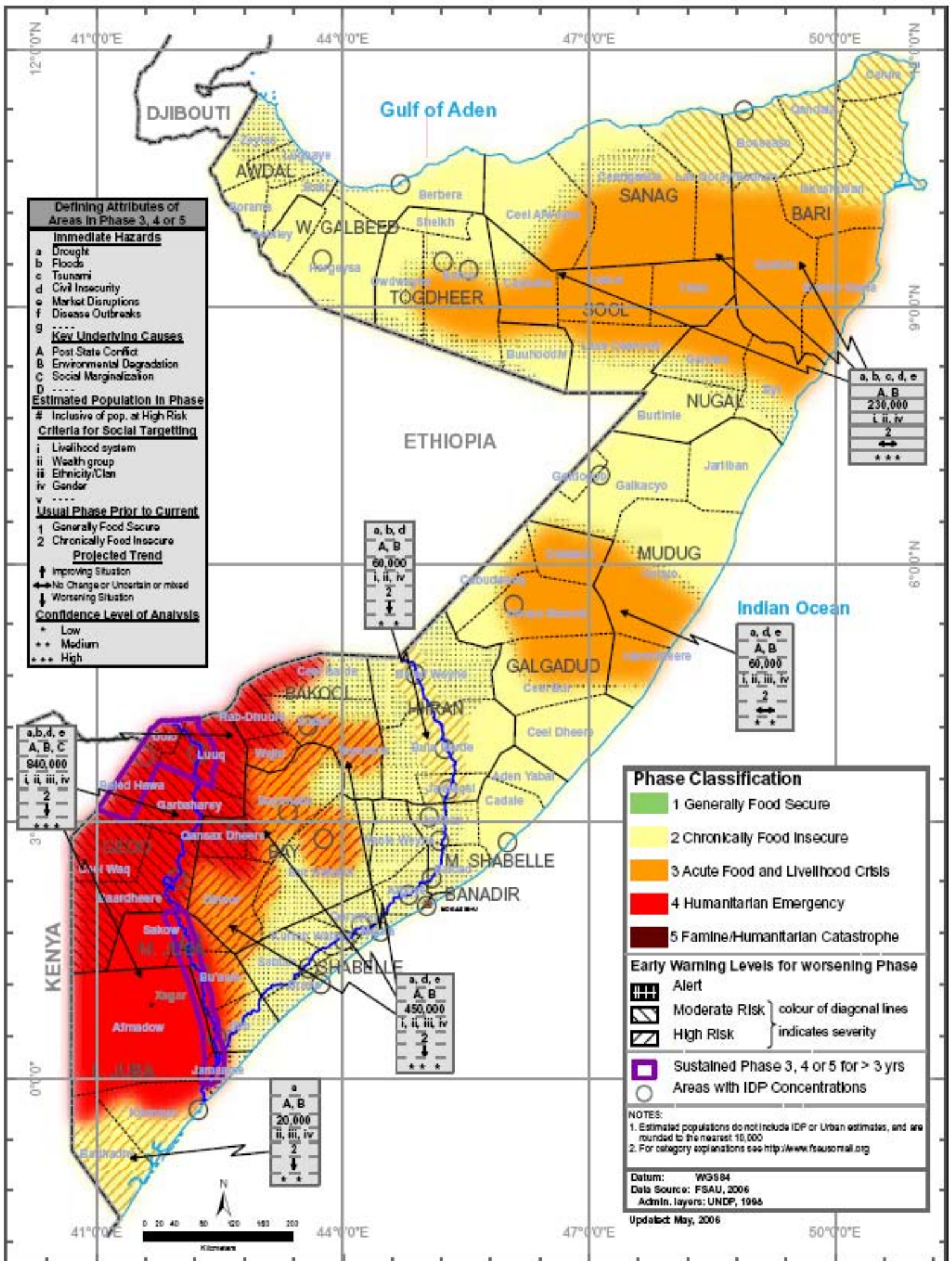
- mitigating immediate outcomes
- supporting livelihoods; and
- addressing underlying and structural causes of food insecurity.

# Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification Reference Table

Phase Classification		Key Reference Outcomes <i>(current or imminent outcomes on lives and livelihoods; based on convergence of evidence)</i>	Strategic Response Framework <i>(mitigate immediate outcomes, support livelihoods, and address underlying/structural causes)</i>
1	Generally Food Secure	<b>Crude Mortality Rate</b> < 0.5 / 10,000 / day <b>Acute Malnutrition</b> <3 % (w/h <-2 z-scores) <b>Stunting</b> <20% (h/age <-2 z-scores) <b>Food Access/ Availability</b> usually adequate (> 2,100 kcal ppp day), stable <b>Dietary Diversity</b> consistent quality and quantity of diversity usually adequate (> 15 litres ppp day), stable <b>Water Access/Avail.</b> moderate to low probability and vulnerability <b>Hazards</b> prevailing and structural peace <b>Civil Security</b> generally sustainable utilization (of 5 capitals) <b>Livelihood Assets</b>	Strategic assistance to pockets of food insecure groups Investment in food and economic production systems Enable development of livelihood systems based on principles of sustainability, justice, and equity Prevent emergence of structural hindrances to food security Advocacy
2	Chronically Food Insecure	<b>Crude Mortality Rate</b> <0.5/10,000/day; U5MR<1/10,000/day <b>Acute Malnutrition</b> >3% but <10 % (w/h <-2 z-score), usual range, stable <b>Stunting</b> >20% (w/age <-2 z-scores) <b>Food Access/ Availability</b> borderline adequate (2,100 kcal ppp day); unstable <b>Dietary Diversity</b> chronic dietary diversity deficit <b>Water Access/Avail.</b> borderline adequate (15 litres ppp day); unstable <b>Hazards</b> recurrent, with high livelihood vulnerability <b>Civil Security</b> 'insurance strategies' <b>Coping</b> stressed and unsustainable utilization (of 5 capitals) <b>Livelihood Assets</b> Pronounced underlying hindrances to food security <b>Structural</b>	Design & implement strategies to increase stability, resistance and resilience of livelihood systems, thus reducing risk Provision of 'safety nets' to high risk groups Interventions for optimal and sustainable use of livelihood assets Create contingency plan Redress structural hindrances to food security Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Advocacy
3	Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis	<b>Crude Mortality Rate</b> 0.5-1 /10,000/day, U5MR 1-2/10,000/dy <b>Acute Malnutrition</b> 10-15 % (w/h <-2 z-score), > than usual, increasing <b>Disease</b> epidemic; increasing <b>Food Access/ Availability</b> lack of entitlement; 2,100 kcal ppp day via asset stripping <b>Dietary Diversity</b> acute dietary diversity deficit <b>Water Access/Avail.</b> 7.5-15 litres ppp day, accessed via asset stripping <b>Destitution/Displacement</b> emerging; diffuse <b>Civil Security</b> limited spread, low intensity conflict <b>Coping</b> 'crisis strategies'; CSI > than reference; increasing <b>Livelihood Assets</b> accelerated and critical depletion or loss of access	Support livelihoods and protect vulnerable groups Strategic and complimentary interventions to immediately ↑ food access/availability AND support livelihoods Selected provision of complimentary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Strategic interventions at community to national levels to create, stabilize, rehabilitate, or protect priority livelihood assets Create or implement contingency plan Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Use 'crisis as opportunity' to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy
4	Humanitarian Emergency	<b>Crude Mortality Rate</b> 1-2 / 10,000 / day, >2x reference rate, increasing; U5MR > 2/10,000/day <b>Acute Malnutrition</b> >15 % (w/h <-2 z-score), > than usual, increasing <b>Disease</b> pandemic <b>Food Access/ Availability</b> severe entitlement gap; unable to meet 2,100 kcal ppp day <b>Dietary Diversity</b> Regularly 2-3 or fewer main food groups consumed <b>Water Access/Avail.</b> < 7.5 litres ppp day (human usage only) <b>Destitution/Displacement</b> concentrated; increasing <b>Civil Security</b> widespread, high intensity conflict <b>Coping</b> 'distress strategies'; CSI significantly > than reference <b>Livelihood Assets</b> near complete & irreversible depletion or loss of access	Urgent protection of vulnerable groups Urgently ↑ food access through complimentary interventions Selected provision of complimentary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Protection against complete livelihood asset loss and/or advocacy for access Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Use 'crisis as opportunity' to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy
5	Famine / Humanitarian Catastrophe	<b>Crude Mortality Rate</b> > 2/10,000 /day (example: 6,000 /1,000,000 /30 days) <b>Acute Malnutrition</b> > 30 % (w/h <-2 z-score) <b>Disease</b> pandemic <b>Food Access/ Availability</b> extreme entitlement gap; much below 2,100 kcal ppp day <b>Water Access/Avail.</b> < 4 litres ppp day (human usage only) <b>Destitution/Displacement</b> large scale, concentrated <b>Civil Security</b> widespread, high intensity conflict <b>Livelihood Assets</b> effectively complete loss; collapse	Critically urgent protection of human lives and vulnerable groups Comprehensive assistance with basic needs (e.g. food, water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Immediate policy/legal revisions where necessary Negotiations with varied political-economic interests Use 'crisis as opportunity' to redress underlying structural causes Advocacy

Early Warning Levels	Probability / Likelihood <i>(of worsening Phase)</i>	Severity <i>(of worsening phase)</i>	Reference Hazards and Vulnerabilities	Implications for Action
Alert	As yet unclear	Not applicable	<b>Hazard:</b> occurrence of, or predicted event stressing livelihoods; with low or uncertain vulnerability <b>Process Indicators:</b> small negative change from normal	Close monitoring and analysis
Moderate Risk	Elevated probability / likelihood	Specified by predicted Phase Class, and as indicated by color of diagonal lines on map.	<b>Hazard:</b> occurrence of, or predicted event stressing livelihoods; with moderate vulnerability <b>Process Indicators:</b> large negative change from normal	Close monitoring and analysis Contingency planning Step-up current Phase interventions
High Risk	High probability; 'more likely than not'		<b>Hazard:</b> occurrence of, or strongly predicted major event stressing livelihoods; with high vulnerability <b>Process Indicators:</b> large and compounding negative changes	Preventative interventions--with increased urgency for High Risk populations Advocacy

Map 1: Somalia Situation Analysis, Post Deyr 2005/06 Projection, January 2006 through June 2006



## Application of the IPC in Somalia: *Situation Analysis*

The IPC builds upon internationally accepted standards and classifications to support a holistic evidence based approach to analysis. The IPC highlights the need for systematic baseline and pre-crisis food security information as a basis for assessment in countries that are likely to face recurrent disasters and protracted crises.

**Map 1** (see previous page) is a visual representation (cartographic protocol) of the IPC classification system based on the FSAU's recent food security projection for the 2005/06 *Deyr* season. The map brings the following unique aspects of the IPC for food security situation analysis into focus:

Key aspects incorporated into this map include:

**Severity (phase classification):** The IPC includes the complete spectrum of food security situations – from general food security to famine. It emphasizes the need for food security interventions during all phases, not just when an emergency breaks out. The inclusion of the Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (Phase 3) underlines the importance of understanding livelihood dynamics and their links to food security.

**Geographic coverage:** The Livelihood Zone is the IPC's core unit for spatial analysis. An analysis of livelihood zones allows for a better understanding of how people within a given livelihood system

typically source their food and income and what their expenditure patterns and coping strategies are. The Household Economy Approach (HEA) developed by SCF-UK and the Food Economy Group is especially pertinent for this analysis. Livelihood assets, such as the Key Reference characteristic, are accounted for and highlight how livelihood endowments interact with institutions to enable (or undermine) livelihoods.

**Immediate and Proximate Causes:** The attributes of a given crisis are defined based on an understanding of hazards, vulnerabilities and underlying causes. In

particular, the framework incorporates risk, which indicates the probability of a hazard event, exposure, and specific vulnerabilities of livelihood systems.

**Projected trend / scenarios:** While the phase classification describes the current or imminent situation for a given area, early warning levels are used as a predictive tool for communicating the risk of a worsening phase.

## Application of the IPC in Somalia: *Response Options*

The operational value of the IPC lies not only in referencing criteria for a consistent situation analysis, but also in explicitly linking that statement to appropriate responses that build on the FAO twin-track approach. The twin-track approach combines broad-based, sustainable agricultural growth and rural development with targeted programmes for enhancing direct access to food for the most needy.

The response framework addresses both immediate needs and medium and longer term responses by meeting three broad objectives: mitigate immediate outcomes, support livelihoods, and address underlying and structural causes

The inclusion of the 'response options' component ensures that responses are better tailored to specific situations. The response options component thus marks a departure from deficit driven modes of

assessment, where 'humanitarian needs' are seen as deficits requiring immediate goods and services. Often, this may increase risk and vulnerability or undermine the resilience of the food economy.

Additionally, the introduction of response analysis requires emergency assessments to prioritize different response options based on a closer examination of situation-specific opportunities and constraints.

### Further Reading

**FAO/FSAU 2006.** *Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification: Technical Manual Version 1.* Nairobi, FAO/FSAU Technical Series IV.11

## Future Applications of the IPC

At the regional and international levels, the IPC tool informs deliberations beyond the Somalia context. For example, it has recently been applied as an analytical tool in the Horn of Africa drought crisis. The tool has been of particular interest to the UN Inter Agency Standing Committee and to the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UN OCHA). In addition, the IPC may help inform joint FAO and WFP efforts in contributing to the Needs Analysis Framework of the UN Consolidated Appeals process for 2006. Moving forward, the IPC contributes to the development of appropriate response protocols and information systems within FAO through the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme and the EC-FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme.