IPC

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

Evidence and Standards for Better Food Security and Nutrition Decisions

Famine Review Committee:
Review of the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) IPC-Compatible Analysis for the Northern Governorates of the Gaza Strip

Conclusions and Recommendations

May 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Published on 4 June 2024

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee (FRC) acknowledges the notable efforts made by FEWS NET. FEWS NET demonstrated high levels of commitment in responding to the FRC's requests for additional information and clarifications during the review, which was highly appreciated.

Nicholas Haan
Faculty Chair, Global Grand Challenges
Singularity University

Peter Hailey
Director
Centre for Humanitarian Change

Daniel Maxwell
Henry J. Leir Professor in Food Security
Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy
Feinstein International Center
Tufts University

Andrew Seal
Associate Professor in International Nutrition
Centre for Climate Change, Migration, Conflict, and Health
University College London - Institute for Global Health

Jose Lopez
Chair of IPC Famine Review Committee
IPC Global Programme Manager
IPC Global Support Unit

The IPC development and implementation has been, and is, made possible by the support of:

IPC Funding Partners

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. FRC CONCLUSIONS 1

2. FAMINE REVIEW PROCESS 2

3. FRC ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION 3

ANNEX 1: ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON FOOD AVAILABILITY 8

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE IPC FAMINE REVIEW OF THE FEWS NET ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS ON THE GAZA STRIP CONDUCTED IN APRIL 2024 11

ANNEX 3: KEY SOURCES USED BY FEWS NET AND THE FAMINE REVIEW COMMITTEE 13

1. FRC CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions of the FRC are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Key Conclusions from the FRC on the Acute Food Insecurity (AFI) Classifications under Review

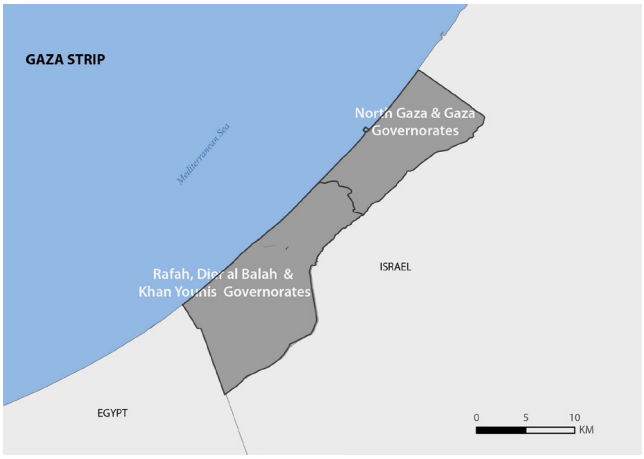
Unit of Analysis	Analysis Period	FEWS NET Classification	FRC Conclusion
Northern Governorates (North Gaza and Gaza)	Current (1 – 30 April 2024)	Famine (IPC Phase 5) with reasonable evidence	The FRC does not find the FEWS NET analysis plausible given the uncertainty and lack of convergence of the supporting evidence employed in the analysis. Therefore, the FRC is unable to make a determination as to whether or not famine thresholds have been passed during April.
	Projection (1 May – 31 July 2024)	Famine (IPC Phase 5) with reasonable evidence	As the FRC does not find the FEWS NET analysis plausible for the current period, the FRC is unable to endorse the IPC Phase 5 (Famine) classification for the projection period. However, this FEWS NET projection is in line with the FRC projection done in March 2024, which has not yet been updated.

The FRC would like to use this opportunity to communicate two extremely important points:

Firstly, all stakeholders who use the IPC for high-level decision-making must understand that whether a Famine classification is confirmed does not in any manner change the fact that extreme human suffering is without a doubt currently ongoing in the Gaza Strip and does not in any manner change the immediate humanitarian imperative to address this civilian suffering by enabling complete, safe, unhindered, and sustained humanitarian access into and throughout the Gaza Strip, including through ceasing hostilities. All actors should not wait until a Famine classification for the current period is made to act accordingly.

Secondly, the FRC would like to highlight that the very fact that we are unable to endorse (or not) FEWS NET's analysis is driven by the lack of essential up to date data on human well-being in Northern Gaza, and Gaza at large. Thus, the FRC strongly requests all parties to enable humanitarian access in general, and specifically to provide a window of opportunity to conduct field surveys in Northern Gaza to have more solid evidence of the food consumption, nutrition, and mortality situation.

Figure 1 Map of the Gasa Strip and the Analysis Units used by FEWS NET



Source: IPC

Map of analysis units. FEWS NET analyzed the northern governorates (North Gaza and Gaza) and the southern governorates (Deir al-Balah, Khan Younis and Rafah) separately.

2. FAMINE REVIEW PROCESS

This review conducted by the FRC is based solely on the data that FEWS NET used for their analysis, which was limited to data covering up to the end of April 2024. The FRC is aware that new data has subsequently become available and looks forward to updating its review of the Gaza Strip situation very soon.

The FRC may be activated under four different scenarios as detailed in the IPC Famine Guidance Note. The review by the FRC is a neutral and independent process aimed at supporting IPC quality assurance and ensuring technical rigour and neutrality of the analysis. The activation of the FRC provides an additional validation step before the release of the analysis results.

In April 2024, FEWS NET conducted an IPC-compatible analysis for the Gaza Strip which resulted in the activation of the Famine Review Committee for the assessment of the plausibility of IPC Phase 5 (Famine) for the northern governorates for a current period of 1 – 30 April 2024 and a projection period of 1 May – 31 July 2024. As stated in the IPC Technical Manual 3.1, "famine reviews are mandatory for both IPC products and IPC-compatible products and are to be conducted before the release of the findings". In line with IPC Technical Manual 3.1[1] and the IPC Famine Guidance Note[2], FEWS NET requested a Famine review on 7 May and shared the necessary documents on 10 May, when the Famine review was officially initiated.

A previous Non-Technical Working Group (NTWG) IPC analysis[3] was conducted in March 2024 and projected Famine (IPC Phase 5) to begin by 15 July 2024. Upon reviewing that analysis, the FRC concluded that Famine was imminent and was expected to begin by the end of May 2024. The April 2024 FEWS NET analysis includes a current analysis for the period of 1 – 30 April 2024, using IPC protocols and evidence requirements for a current classification, and a projection analysis for the period of 1 May – 31 July 2024, using IPC protocols and evidence requirements for a projection classification.

On 13 May, the FRC held an initial consultation with FEWS NET regarding their submission, as would be held with any Analysis Team and/or country Technical Working Group submitting an analysis to a Famine Review. Given the FRC's high level of familiarity with the Gaza Strip and evidence available for food consumption, nutritional status, and mortality following the Famine reviews of December 2023 and March 2024, the IPC Global Steering waived the need to conduct Step 1 of the Famine review – preparation of the Famine review – on 16 May.

Following a set of questions and clarifications requested by the FRC on key aspects of FEWS NET analysis, FEWS NET submitted a revised analysis on 17 May 2024, including new elements that were taken under consideration by the FRC in their review. A further consultation was organized on 18 May 2024 to allow FEWS NET to provide further explanation regarding the new elements submitted on the previous day.

The FRC reached its final conclusion and presented its findings to FEWS NET on 21 May followed by a presentation of results to the IPC Global Steering Committee and IPC resource partners on 22 May.

[1] *https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/resources/ipc-manual/en/*

[2] *https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/resources/resources-details/en/c/1152897/*

[3] *https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156872/?iso3=PSE*

3. FRC ASSESSMENT OF THE FEWS NET ANALYSIS FOR NORTHERN GAZA (NORTH GAZA AND GAZA GOVERNORATES)

Following an IPC Acute Food Insecurity non-TWG analysis held in February 2024, the FRC issued a report on 18 March 2024 which stated that, in Gaza and North Gaza Governorates the Famine thresholds for acute food insecurity had already been surpassed, and it was likely that the Famine thresholds for acute malnutrition had been exceeded (FRC report 18 March 2024). At the time of that IPC analysis and based on the best available information on the expected delivery of food and other supplies, the FRC projected that Famine (IPC Phase 5) was imminent and expected to become manifest by the end of May 2024. For the rest of the Gaza Strip, including the governorates of Rafah, Khan Younis, and Deir al-Balah, the FRC determined that there was a risk of Famine between mid-March and mid-July 2024 under a worst-case scenario with a reasonable chance of occurring.

The FRC made a number of recommendations to reduce the likelihood of Famine or mitigate the impact of Famine. We note that many of these recommendations have not been fully implemented, in particular ensuring safe, sustained, and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance and commercial deliveries as well as field surveys of human wellbeing, enabled by ceasing all hostilities.

The FRC remains gravely concerned about the situation in the Gaza Strip. Important drivers of Famine risk include the intensity of the ongoing conflict, the killing of humanitarian staff, the continued lack of adherence to International Humanitarian Law, the lack of humanitarian access, the destruction of essential civilian infrastructure, the catastrophic food security situation, severe challenges to the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) system, and the resulting risks for health, nutrition, and mortality. These concerns pertain to the whole of the Gaza Strip though are especially acute in the northern governorates. The beginning of the ground assault in Rafah Governorate and the closure of the main southern crossing points for humanitarian assistance, along with the attacks on assistance convoys, have further heightened concerns within the last few days.

At the beginning of May 2024, FEWS NET issued a new current classification for the month of April and a projection through July 2024. FEWS NET is a member of the IPC Global Partnership, and their agency-specific analyses qualify as being IPC-compatible. Due to the severity of the situation identified in the FEWS NET analysis, the FRC was activated at the end of April and received the FEWS NET analysis for review on 10 May 2024. The FRC has carefully reviewed the evidence used by FEWS NET and examined the justifications and their classifications. The committee acknowledges the careful analytical arguments that have been developed and presented by the FEWS NET team.

From March through April 2024, several key aggravating and mitigating factors for food security changed, including in the Governorates of Gaza and North Gaza. The FRC concurs with FEWS NET on the direction of many of these changes, though for several key issues is unable to concur with FEWS NET's conclusions on the magnitude of change that occurred by the end of April 2024. To address major gaps in publicly accessible evidence, including direct and indirect evidence for food consumption and livelihood change, nutritional status, and mortality, FEWS NET relied on multiple layers of assumptions and inference, beginning with food availability and access in northern Gaza and continuing through nutritional status and mortality. While the use of assumptions and inference is standard practice in IPC generally, the limitations of the available body of evidence and the extent of its convergence for northern Gaza in April leads to a very high level of uncertainty regarding the current food security and nutritional status of the population.

Food security analysis

Since the FRC review conducted in March 2024, there seems to have been a significant increase in the number of food trucks entering northern Gaza. The FEWS NET analysis acknowledges that humanitarian assistance in the area has increased significantly, finding that caloric availability from humanitarian assistance increased from 9% in February to 34% to 36% in March and 59% to 63% in April. The opening of alternative routes to the

Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings, the authorization of commercial truck entry, as well as airdrops, allowed for an increase of food availability. However, the extent to which this has been and is sufficient to revert the trends estimated in the previous analysis remains uncertain.

The FRC agrees with FEWS NET that food availability was likely increasing month-on-month in March and April 2024 relative to the extreme scarcity seen from November 2023 through February 2024. However, the FRC diverges with FEWS NET on the potential size of the increase in food availability, particularly within April.

Nonetheless, there remain significant data gaps and uncertainty about the total number of trucks entering the Gaza Strip and the level of humanitarian assistance that is being trucked into and distributed within the different areas of the Gaza Strip. Even with this reported increase in the number of food trucks entering the Gaza Strip, they were likely insufficient to counter the months of deprivation, and the IPC Famine threshold for Food Consumption requirements were still possibly surpassed, but given the wide ranges of data interpretations and uncertainty, the FRC is not able to make a determination. The FRC notes that the overall number of trucks entering the Gaza Strip and available food that FEWS NET used for its analysis is significantly less than reported by other sources[4]. Possible explanations for these discrepancies include: 1) mismatch in reporting periods for the first version of the analysis submitted by FEWS NET and 2) the degree of inclusion of commercial, privately contracted deliveries.

In particular, the FRC highlights several issues contributing to a high level of uncertainty regarding food availability in the Governorates of Gaza and North Gaza in April 2024. FRC concerns over the availability and access analysis provided by FEWS NET include:

- The FEWS NET food availability analysis excludes the contribution of commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries, potentially between 1,820 with metric tons (MT) of food (low estimate) and 3,850 MT of food (high estimate) in the month of March and about 2,405 MT of food (low estimate) and 4,004 MT of food (high estimate) in the month of April 2024. While the intervals are extremely wide, indicative of a high level of uncertainty, this corresponds to the potential exclusion of about 25-76% coverage of the daily kilocalorie requirement in March and 34-82% in April[5]. Even a conservative approach towards the commercial and/or privately contracted food deliveries to northern Gaza, which the FRC considers possible, would still indicate a contribution of 25% and 34% coverage of the daily kilocalorie requirement in March and April, respectively.

- FEWS NET food availability analysis excludes the contribution of WFP deliveries to bakeries in northern Gaza, including a reported 940 MT of flour, sugar, salt, and yeast in April. While the intervals are extremely wide, indicative of a high level of uncertainty, this corresponds to the potential exclusion of about 4% to 15% coverage of the daily kilocalorie requirement.

- The FEWS NET food availability analysis attributed a value of 3,640 calories per kg of unspecified WFP food assistance delivered by trucks and 2,657 calories for unspecified food assistance delivered by airdrops as well as for maritime deliveries. The FRC estimates these values could be significantly higher or significantly lower. Similarly, FEWS NET estimated the composition of non-US airdrops as including 70% food, which could be significantly higher or significantly lower.

The FRC finds the last assumption above to be conservative, though plausible. However, the exclusion of all commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries and WFP deliveries of flour, sugar, yeast, and salt to bakeries, translates to the exclusion of food equal to as much as 38% to 49% coverage of the daily kilocalorie requirement in April. While FEWS NET estimated the caloric availability in the area as covering only 59-63% of the needs (based uniquely on Humanitarian Food Assistance) in April, the review done by the FRC estimates that this range would be 75% to 109% if commercial and/or privately contracted food

[4] Other sources include the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories: Judea and Samaria and towards the Gaza Strip (COGAT) of the state of Israel.

[5] In this analysis, Kilocalorie requirement is intended as the conversion of the food commodities supplied in a given area into its respective caloric value, in comparison with the estimated daily needs of the population in that area. The percentage refers to the coverage of an individual caloric requirement of 2,100 Kcal per day per person. The coverage of the requirement indicates the calories available in a given area (availability) and does not necessarily equate to actual intake of individuals or households, which depends on access.

[6] This range broadens even more with consideration of non-humanitarian supply which further compounds the case for high level of uncertainty.

deliveries were included (157% if a higher estimate was used[6]). It is possible and likely that a vast part of these commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries was and remains difficult to access, especially for the most vulnerable. However, the FRC finds unlikely that the totality of these supplies was and remains completely inaccessible to the population. For a more thorough analysis, FEWS NET could have developed scenarios assuming different levels of access to commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries as well as subsidized bread from WFP bakeries, avoiding a 'zero' assumption.

While the analysis conducted during the review estimates that the percentages of kilocalorie requirements met are higher than that of FEWS NET, the lower FEWS NET estimates do suggest two key points: 1) that there was a significant increase in food availability from February to March to April, and 2) that nearly 100% of daily kilocalorie requirements were available for the estimated population of 300,000 people in April, even using conservative calculations.

The FEWS NET analysis rightly points out that food availability in northern Gaza does not determine individual or household food access alone and thus food security status. While a very large portion of food deliveries are humanitarian, commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries and humanitarian delivery to bakeries cannot be considered wholly inaccessible. Rather, a careful analysis of food access is required and should include financial, physical and social access to food.

For ***financial access***, unfortunately there is no dataset available that tracks market prices from pre-escalation through April 2024 in a disaggregated and consistent manner. Field reports do indicate very high and inaccessible prices combined with widespread destruction of livelihoods and sources of income. However, there are also reports that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is decreasing and prices of some key commodities such as bread were also decreasing in April, as indicated in the FEWS NET analysis. There are large data gaps on prices and on the ability of populations to access financial assets or other services. With these data gaps, it is not possible to make a clear determination on overall financial access. While it is extremely limited, it seemed to be improving during April. The FRC acknowledges that the most vulnerable people may have extremely limited access to food sources other than from humanitarian assistance, however, it is important to note that financial access limitations for an unknown population should not be generalized to make all commercial and/or privately contracted deliveries wholly inaccessible for the population.

For ***social access***, field reports indicate a breakdown in normal social order that may prevent some vulnerable populations from accessing assistance. However, it is not possible to determine the scope or scale of this breakdown geographically or quantify the impact in terms of people that are completely unable to access food, either humanitarian or commercial and/or privately contracted, or those who are unable to benefit from social networks or other community coping mechanisms.

For ***physical access***, the sheer destruction of basic infrastructure such as roads, markets, and other essential infrastructure, along with the ongoing high levels and unpredictable patterns of hostilities make it very dangerous for people to move freely and access food or other basic needs. However, it is not possible to determine which specific population groups or locations may be wholly unable to access food. The FRC notes that humanitarian assistance was reportedly delivered in April in areas previously inaccessible, such as within Gaza city.

The FRC notes that FEWS NET does not present up-to-date data or evidence for April from standardized indicators for food consumption and livelihood change derived from survey methods such as the Food Consumption Score, Household Hunger Scale, or other indicators found in the IPC reference table. While IPC protocols do allow for the utilization of data that is not necessarily up-to-date, it must be interpreted for its relevance to current status analysis by considering the highly dynamic situation. The FEWS NET analysis utilizes survey data on food consumption collected two months before April together with more recent, though incomplete, contributing factor analysis of availability and access to food. The pre-April period reflects conditions when food availability was at one of its lowest points, with only 9-15% of daily kilocalorie

needs met. This is the period where observed, extremely high levels of food insecurity far surpassed the IPC Famine threshold for food consumption. While an updated Outcome Analysis employing Households Economy Approach (HEA) is provided by FEWS NET, the modelling incorporates data inputs from months prior to April that may not fully reflect the conditions in April given the highly dynamic situation, as well as assumptions about the current situation that are difficult to verify.

Overall, the FRC shares similar concerns with the FEWS NET analysis about the food consumption situation given the extreme levels of food insecurity that were measured in surveys prior to April. It is possible, though lacking adequate supporting evidence, that the IPC Famine thresholds for food consumption were still surpassed during April. Recognizing there was a significant increase in food flows following the previous IPC and FRC projections in March, we are unable to make a conclusion on food consumption in April in the absence of stronger evidence on food access.

In conclusion, regarding estimates of food consumption, the FRC has some concerns with the methods by which the situation with regard to food availability in northern Gaza was calculated, which, combined with an incomplete understanding of food access makes the FEWS NET conclusions tenuous.

Nutrition and mortality analysis

The FRC considers that the scenario and assumptions developed by FEWS NET for the evolution of acute malnutrition are plausible. The very steep increase in the prevalence of GAM by MUAC, that was observed during the March review, might have been maintained. It is therefore possible that the IPC threshold for IPC Phase 4/5 was breached during April. However, the FRC is unable to make a determination as to whether or not Famine thresholds for acute malnutrition have been passed during April. Indeed, in the current circumstances, given the increase in food supply, a reduction in acute malnutrition might also be considered possible.

The FRC considers that the scenario and assumptions developed for the evolution of the crude death rate (CDR) and under-five death rate (U5DR) are not supported by the available evidence for the current period of analysis. It appears instead plausible that the steep increase in deaths due to malnutrition and/or dehydration, that was reported by the Ministry of Health in March, did not continue at the same rate into April.

It is possible that deaths were occurring where households were sheltering rather than in health facilities, precluding the recording and reporting of these deaths. Repeated attacks on and around health facilities during or shortly before the current analysis period may well have increased people's reluctance to attend health facilities and impacted the functionality of these facilities. This would have, in turn, increased the likelihood that deaths would have remained unreported. However, there remains considerable uncertainty about the death toll in northern Gaza during this period, particularly for non-trauma mortality, an uncertainty that will only be overcome when adequate humanitarian access is allowed to permit the implementation of a comprehensive survey.

The FRC notes that the absence of evidence on all the Famine outcomes does not prevent the classification of Famine. Indeed, the FEWS NET team noted that the absence of mortality data did not prevent the FRC from classifying a situation as Famine Likely[7] in the context of South Sudan. However, in all contexts, the FRC reviews the whole body of evidence to draw its conclusions as to whether the Famine thresholds are likely to have been crossed. This is done based on the evidence available and the analytical process conducted through expert judgment on how this evidence converge and points towards Famine situation.

FEWS NET analytical reasoning in support of the evolution of mortality in Gaza draws on data from previous humanitarian emergencies in Somalia to illustrate the relationship between a high prevalence of acute malnutrition and severely elevated non-trauma death rates. While the FRC takes due note of these important examples, it is problematic to extrapolate

[7] *Famine Likely classification has been renamed Famine with Reasonable evidence as per the IPC Famine Guidance Note.*

the relationship between malnutrition and mortality in different contexts to the situation in the Gaza Strip during April 2024 for several reasons. Firstly, the baseline acute malnutrition prevalence in Somalia had been higher for a longer period than in the Gaza Strip as of April 2024. At the time mortality rates were measured in Somalia before the classification of Famine in 2011, the prevalence of acute malnutrition was likely higher than the prevalence that is thought to have existed in northern Gaza in April. Secondly, the extremely high death rates seen in Somalia immediately preceding and during the 2011 Famine often followed forced displacement from remote villages and travel for prolonged distances before arriving at Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps, which lacks a direct parallel in northern Gaza as of April. Thirdly, the level of humanitarian assistance being delivered to IDPs before they migrated was likely to have been much lower in Somalia before and during the 2011 Famine compared to northern Gaza in April. Fourthly, the burden of infections with a high case fatality rate was likely much higher in Somalia before and during the 2011 Famine than in northern Gaza, in large part due to the much lower vaccination coverage seen in Somalia compared to the Gaza Strip.

ANNEX 1: ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FOOD SECURITY ANALYSIS

The FRC reviewed the analysis provided by FEWS NET in support of their proposed Famine with reasonable evidence classification and projection. Overall, the FEWS NET analysis is robust and its efforts to overcome major gaps in direct and indirect evidence for food consumption, acute malnutrition, and mortality are notable. However, the FRC identified several elements of the analysis that involve high uncertainty and that contributed to the FRC's inability to endorse the FEWS NET analysis considering the limitations of the body of evidence available and the lack of convergence of this evidence.

The FRC has no major disagreement with FEWS NET's analysis of hazards like conflict and other contributing factors, including the impact of conflict on the food system of northern Gaza and the severe lack of basic services provision such as health, water, sanitation, and hygiene, and telecommunications services there. The FRC concurs with the estimated level of displacement through April 2024. Similarly, the FRC agrees with FEWS NET choice of maintaining the estimates for the total population of northern Gaza as well as the distribution of the remaining population across the Gaza and North Gaza governorates that was used in the last IPC and FRC analyses for the Gaza Strip. While recent humanitarian estimates may converge around 300,000 individuals remaining in the northern governorates, the FRC highlights the high degree of uncertainty in the estimates of total population and the proportion of this population within each northern governorate at the time of analysis, as well as its demographic composition.

The limitations explored in this section are not necessarily areas of disagreement of the FRC with FEWS NET analysis. Alternatively, FRC is of the opinion that FEWS NET, in order to compensate for data gaps and complete its analysis, found itself in the position of making deliberate choices over assumptions, without the necessary supporting evidence, increasing significantly the degree of uncertainty over the plausibility of food security analysis, which leads in turn on setting a series of assumptions upon which further assumptions for nutritional status and mortality were then layered. Uncertainty around food availability and access compounds the uncertainty on the likely evolution of acute malnutrition prevalence and the rate of all-age and under-five non-trauma mortality.

In particular, the FRC highlights several issues contributing to a high level of uncertainty regarding food supply or food availability in the governorates of Gaza and North Gaza in April 2024. This includes:

1. Food assistance deliveries reporting period: FEWS NET's initially submitted analysis listed three main external sources of food for the Gaza and North Gaza governorates in April, including donor-government-coordinated airdrops, maritime deliveries (for a total of 1,754 MT), and ground and air deliveries by the World Food Programme (WFP), 1,345 MT, totalling 3,099 MT. While the current period of analysis used by FEWS NET is 1 to 30 April 2024, a shorter reporting periods (up to 23 April 2024 for WFP reported food assistance and 25 April for donor-government coordinated airdrops) was initially used for food sources. On 9 May, WFP released a new report reporting the whole of April deliveries and complemented reporting for the previous weeks. Following the FRC request to integrate this information into the analysis, FEWSNET added the missing deliveries in particular:

a. 293 MT were added to the donor-government-coordinated airdrops, maritime deliveries, totalling to 2,047;

b. 1340 MT were added to the WFP reporting (land and airdrops). The WFP addition of 940 MT in support of bakeries was not added.

In conclusion, the metric tonnage of food assistance supplied to the northern Gaza governorates went from 2,307 in March to 3,792 MT in April (against an initially reported 3,099 MT), excluding bakeries contribution to supply, which would otherwise total to 4,732 MT.

2. In relation to the previous point, it is worth questioning this last point regarding the exclusion of the bakeries contribution to food supply in the area. FEWS NET's assessment of the extreme constraints faced by the remaining population of the Gaza and North Gaza Governorates in accessing available food is used to justify this exclusion, given that the output of the bakeries was sold and not freely distributed. In April, this

exclusion removes 940 metric tons of flour, sugar, salt, and yeast delivered by WFP to bakeries in northern Gaza. These 940 metric tons should be included in analysis of food availability to remain consistent with the analysis of all other external sources of food for northern Gaza in April, including all delivery by ground, air, and sea. While the arguments regarding extreme constraints on food access are persuasive, the delivery of this metric tonnage did contribute to food availability, particularly through the bulk transfer of commodities like flour and sugar. The size of the bakery exclusion in kilocalories is between 4% and 15% depending on the assumptions of Kcal loss in the baking process. The FRC is of the position that when presenting food availability FEWS NET should have accounted for all sources and in a second step elaborate on access to these different sources. In particular, for the WFP bakeries, it should be noted that the bread is provided at highly subsidized price. A generic exclusion of the population accessing this source of food might be an assumption which highly impacts the overall analysis that is not supported by evidence.

3. Another extremely important element of FEWS NET analysis is the exclusion of reporting of privately contracted and/or commercial trucking: In the initially submitted analysis, FEWS NET did not incorporate any estimate of privately contracted and/or commercial food truck entry into the Gaza and North Gaza Governorates in March and April 2024. Upon request of the FRC to try and include all sources in the avaialability/food supply analysis, including those not directly labelled as food assistance, FEWS NET produced an extremely detailed list of all these food delivery/entry into northern Gaza governorates. These deliveries accounts for about 1,820 MT (low estimate) and 3,850 MT (high estimate) in the month of March and for about 2,405 MT (low estimate) and 4,004 MT (high estimate) in the month of April 2024. Despite the provision of these estimates, FEWS NET did not incorporate them into their final assessment of food availability, indicating the difficulties to estimate caloric contribution and the share of these supply distributed unconditionally. As for the bakeries, the FRC is of the advice that when presenting food availability FEWS NET should have accounted for all sources and in a second step elaborate on access to these different sources. In particular, while the FRC concours on the high level of uncertainty over which share of these deliveries is freely accessible to the population, assuming generic exclusion of the population from accessing this source of food might be another assumption which highly impacts on the overall analysis that is not supported by evidence.

4. The attribution of caloric values and tonnage for different types of deliveries is also contributing to the high uncertainty over the final estimates of caloric requirement coverage. In details:

- While the US airdropped meal (MRE) has a fixed and certain caloric value (1,250-1,300 per Kg), all other type of airdrop were attributed a caloric value of 2,657 and a 30% discount on the total weight to account for non-food content of the airdrop delivery. Both these assumptions can be possible, but these values might have been significantly higher or significantly lower. For instance, airdrop might have included High Energy Biscuits (HEB) (4,500 Kcal per Kg) or Lybia rations (3,982 Kcal per Kg) or wheat (3,640 Kcal per Kg) and the content of the airdrop might have been 90% or 50% food, and there is unfortunately no evidence of the actual food weight and caloric composition for the vast majority of the airdrops.

- While many of the trucks documented in the UNRWA manifest includes a broad description of the type of food contained, allowing estimates of kilocalories per lorry, there are also a significant number of gaps regarding contents (therefore caloric contribution) of trucks labelled as 'food trucks 'but which a non-specified content. Regarding these trucks, FEWS NET analysis attributed an average of 3,535 Kcal (wheat flour and canned beans) and in the revision attributed an average of 3,640 (Wheat flour and canned chickpeas). Like the previous point, both these assumptions can be possible, but these values might have been significantly higher or significantly lower.

The FRC reiterates that these select issues are noted to highlight the level of uncertainty regarding food availability and access in northern Gaza in April 2024. This high uncertainty is compounded through several layers of assumptions, with the assumptions needed for food availability and access then combined with a series of assumptions for the evolution of nutritional status and non-trauma all-age and under-five mortality. The limitations of the available evidence, rather than flaws in the FEWS NET analysis, are a main reason that the FRC is unable to endorse FEWS NET's conclusions.

COMPARISON OF FEWS NET ANALYSIS AND REVIEW ESTIMATES	MARCH (31 days)			APRIL (30 days)		
FOOD SUPPLIES - HUMANITARIAN ONLY	**FEWS NET original analysis**	**FEWS NET revised analysis**	**FRC Review**	**FEWS NET original analysis**	**FEWS NET revised analysis**	**FRC Review**
Government airdrops from US (meals) in MT	402	402	402	404	467	467
Governement airdrops other than US and maritime shipment in MT	1,008	985	985	1,350	1,580	1,580
WFP airdrops in MT	20	20	20	1,345	45	45
WFP land deliveries with trucks in MT (* FEWS NET new omits 940 MT per bakeries while the review includes it)	900	900	900		1,700	2,640
TOTAL METRIC TONNES OF FOOD SUPPLIES - HUMANITARIAN ONLY	**2,330**	**2,307**	**2,307**	**3,099**	**3,792**	**4,732**
FEWS NET ANALYSIS (OLD: 1,250 Kcal per Kg for US meals, 2,657 Kcal per Kg for non US airdrops and maritime, unknown trucks content estimated at 2,657 Kcal per Kg; NEW SUBMISSION: 1,250 Kcal per Kg for US meals, 2,657 Kcal per Kg for non US airdrops and maritime, 3,900 Kcal per Kg for WFP airdrops, 3,640 Kcal per Kg for WFP trucks)	FEWS NET original analysis	FEWS NET revised analysis	FRC Review	FEWS NET original analysis	FEWS NET revised analysis	FRC Review
LOWER INTERVAL: FEWS NET ESTIMATE of KCAL COVERAGE per person per day considering individual requirement at 2,100	34%	34%		48%	59%	
HIGHER INTERVAL: FEWS NET ESTIMATE of KCAL COVERAGE per person per day considering individual requirement at 1,972	37%	36%		51%	63%	
REVIEW (1,250 Kcal per Kg for US meals, 3,982 (Lybia ration) per Kg for non US airdrops, maritime and unknown trucks content)	FEWS NET original analysis	FEWS NET revised analysis	FRC Review	FEWS NET original analysis	FEWS NET revised analysis	FRC Review
Same as FEWS NET but adding bakeries contributions			34%			75%
FOOD SUPPLY - COMMERICAL / PRIVATELY CONTRACTED (MAY INCLUDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FROM CROSS BORDER ACTORS)	**FEWS NET original analysis**	**FEWS NET revised analysis**	**FRC Review**	**FEWS NET original analysis**	**FEWS NET revised analysis**	**FRC Review**
Low FEWS NET Estimates MT (Review consider plausible)		1,820	1,820		2,405	2,405
High FEWS NET Estimates MT (Review consider plausible)		3,850	3,850		4,004	4,004
Low FEWS NET Estimates of KCAL COVERAGE from commerical and/or privately contracted delivery		25%	25%		34%	34%
High FEWS NET Estimates of KCAL COVERAGE from commerical and/or privately contracted delivery		76%	76%		82%	82%
Low Estimates of TOTAL METRIC TONNES available from all sources	2,330	4,127	4,127	3,099	6,197	7,137
High EstimatesTOTAL METRIC TONNES available from all sources	2,330	6,157	6,157	3,099	7,796	8,736
Low Estimates of Kcal coverage from all food deliveries	**34%**	**34%**	**59%**	**48%**	**59%**	**109%**
High Estimates of Kcal coverage from all food deliveries	**37%**	**36%**	**110%**	**51%**	**63%**	**157%**

Note: FEWS NET original analysis refers to the initially submitted April product, while revised FEWS NET analysis refers to the FEWS net response to FRC questions received on 17/05.

In April, the review analysis of possible assistance and the FEWS NET analysis of assistance differ only on the WFP delivery of 940 MTs of food to bakeries in northern Gaza, where the review includes this tonnage and FEWS NET excludes it. All other assumptions for this "aid" category in April are the same.

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE IPC FAMINE REVIEW OF THE FEWS NET ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS ON THE GAZA STRIP CONDUCTED IN APRIL 2024

Introduction

An IPC-compatible[8] acute food insecurity (AFI) analysis was conducted by FEWS NET in April 2024 employing IPC protocols. The analysis relied entirely on publicly accessible data, reports, and assessments from various institutions and organizations. The analysis was successfully concluded in early May 2024, and was followed by the activation of the Famine Review Committee (FRC) for a Famine Review.

Famine Reviews are triggered when at least one of the following conditions is met: (i) the country IPC Technical Working Group (TWG) concludes that at least one area is classified in IPC AFI Phase 5 Famine – Solid Evidence or Famine – Reasonable Evidence; or (ii) in case of a breakdown in technical consensus within the country IPC TWG regarding possible Famine classifications; or (iii) in case the IPC GSU, acknowledging the presence of evidence above IPC AFI Phase 5 thresholds, decides to activate a Famine Review; or (iv) in case, for similar reasons, an IPC Global Partner officially requests the IPC GSU to activate it.[9]

This specific review was activated at the request of FEWS NET in liner with IPC protocols requiring a Famine review for IPC and IPC-compatible analyses meeting at least one condition for Famine review activation. The FRC was requested to assess the plausibility of a Famine (IPC Phase 5) with reasonable evidence classification and projection for the entirety of northern Gaza, including the Gaza and North Gaza governorates. A process of review by the FRC is set up according to the IPC Famine Classification Special Additional Protocols in Manual IPC V3.1.

The IPC Famine Review process consists of the following steps: (i) the IPC GSU and IPC global partners review available analysis and evidence in preparation of the FRC's review; and (ii) review by the FRC. Following the agreement of the IPC Steering Committee this review did not include the step 1, considering the request from FEWSNET for an expedite process and the level of familiarity of the Famine Review Committee with the Gaza analysis. The FRC, in fact, conducted two previous reviews of Famine classifications in the past five months. The review by the FRC is a neutral and independent process aiming at supporting IPC quality assurance and helping to ensure technical rigor and neutrality of an analysis. Review by the FRC is a specific procedure activated to endorse or not endorse Famine classifications when IPC AFI analyses show a potential or already identified situation of Famine.

Purpose

The IPC FRC review is an important mechanism of the global, regional and national partnership and governance structures. The committee is formed as needed and on demand and its activation represents an additional validation step before IPC results are released to clear the IPC Phase 5 classification (i.e. IPC Phase 5 Famine with solid or with reasonable evidence) estimated to support quality assurance and technical consensus building. The committee is to be convened at the request of the IPC GSU.

Composition

The IPC Global Famine Review Committee (IPC FRC) will be composed of five independent technical experts. Members are identified at the activation of IPC FRC and selected based on the following criteria:

I. Globally recognized as leading technical food security and nutrition experts

II. Neutral to the IPC outcome, who have not participated in the analysis under review

[8] *IPC-compatible refers to analysis that adheres to all IPC protocols with the exception of technical consensus (Function 1, Protocols 1.1 and 1.2). IPC-compatible analysis may be undertaken outside of a recognized IPC Technical Working Group, such as by a single organization. The only Function 4 – Quality Assurance protocol that applies to IPC-compatible analysis is external quality review. This may be requested by a national IPC Technical Working Group of a country for which publicly released IPC-compatible classifications have been conducted if there are concerns about a lack of adherence to protocols for area-level Phase 4 classification. Any IPC-compatible analysis is the sole responsibility of the organizations conducting it. Publicly released IPC-compatible analysis must include the following disclaimer or similar text: "This is an IPC-compatible classification, which uses key IPC protocols but is not built on multi-partner technical consensus".*

[9] *https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC-Guidance-Note-on-Famine.pdf*

Documentation needed

As part of this standard process, partners who participated in the analysis are requested to confidentially share key information to allow the FRC to conduct the review. This includes:

I. The worksheets of the areas requested to be reviewed by the FRC,

II. The population estimates per phase for all areas covered by the analysis. These are required for the FRC to contextualize the situation of the specific areas under review into the broader IPC analysis at country level.

III. The area population, possibly indicating resident and IDP (this latest can be an estimation of actual)

IV. The IPC map showing the final classification for all areas covered by the analysis. The entire map is required for the FRC to contextualize the situation of the specific areas under review into the broader IPC analysis at country level.

V. The raw data that allowed to produce the Food Security related indicators as well as the raw data from Nutrition SMART surveys that was used in the IPC classification for the areas under review. This is of critical importance as this will allow the FRC to assess by themselves both the reliability and validity of the data that feeds the IPC.

VI. The repository of all the evidence employed in the classification of the area under review. This should include all reports and evidence employed in the analysis. WASH and Health reports are also requested for these areas if available. Any additional report from any partners supporting better contextualization will be welcome.

VII. Information regarding Humanitarian Food and other type of Assistance (actual tonnage distribution, typology of beneficiaries, targeting method, etc..).

All the documentation is treated confidentially.

Tasks

During their review, the FRC will assess the time and method validity of the evidence supporting the IPC classification, appreciate the interpretation and documentation of evidence and analysis and the overall conclusion on Phase classification and population figures based on the parameters presented in this guidance note. The FRC will then conclude by producing recommendation to FEWS NET, including confirming or disproving Famine classifications.

Process and Timeline.

The proposed timeline for the Quality Review process is presented below.

Step	Activity Description	Dates
1	FEWS NET submitted their analysis and requested activation of a Famine Review	10 May 2024
2	FRC held initial consultation with FEWS NET regarding the submission and began reviewing all submitted materials	13 May 2024
3	IPC Global Steering Committee confirmed no objection to forego Step 1 – Famine Review Preparation - and FRC continued Step 2	16 May 2024
4	FRC presented results of the review to FEWS NET	21 May 2024
5	The FRC presented its conclusions to the IPC Global Steering Committee and IPC resource partners	22 May 2024

ANNEX 3: KEY SOURCES USED BY FEWS NET AND THE FAMINE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Source	Food Security Element	Reliability Score
Iran Updates, Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project 2024. Updated regularly.	Conflict	R_2
Israel/Palestine Reports, Alerts, and Statements, International Crisis Group. Updated regularly.	Conflict	R_2
Media reports, including Haaretz, Times of Israel, New York Times, Financial Times. Updated regularly. Updated regularly.	Conflict	R_1+
Gaza Strip – Interim Damage Assessment Summary Note. The European Union, the World Bank, the United Nations. March 29, 2024. March 29, 2024.	Conflict, infrastructure and agriculture damage	R_1+
Khan Yunis in Rubble: Sat Images Reveal Widespread Destruction, Flattened Buildings in Gaza's Second-largest City. Haaretz. March 14, 2024. March 14, 2024.	Conflict, infrastructure damage	R_2
Gaza: More than 40 per cent of agriculture sector totally destroyed. Interview. United Nations. March 14, 2024. March 14, 2024.	Conflict, agriculture damage	R_0
Gaza Strip Imagery Analysis. UNOSAT. February 24, 2024 February 24, 2024	Conflict, infrastructure damage	R_2
Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #159. OCHA. April 29, 2024. April 29, 2024. Gaza's unexploded ordnance could take 14 years to clear. UN NEWS. April 26, 2024. Provides assessment of debris and unexploded ordnances.	Conflict, infrastructure damage	R_0
UNRWA Situation Report #105 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem - All information from 25-28 April 2024, is valid as of 28 April 2024 at 22:30. UNRWA. April 30, 2024. April 30, 2024.	Displacement	R_1+, R_2
Humanitarian Access Snapshot - Gaza Strip | 1-31 March 2024. OCHA. April 6, 2024. April 6, 2024.	Humanitarian access	R_2
Gaza Supplies and Dispatch Tracking Dashboard, UNRWA, April 2024 April 2024	Food availability	R_2
Gaza food supply assessment, as of April 2024. Gaza Special Report. FEWS NET. May 3, 2024 May 3, 2024	Food availability	R_1+, R_2
Killing starving Palestinians and targeting aid trucks: A Deliberate Israeli policy to reinforce famine in the Gaza Strip, April 2024. Euro-Med Monitor. April 2024. April 2024.	Food availability, food access	R_1+
UN agency official says northern Gaza still 'heading toward famine'. VOA News. April 25, 2024. April 25, 2024.	Food availability, food access	R_0
Gaza Market Monitoring 01 March 2024 Flash Updates. WFP Palestine. March 2024. March 2024.	Food availability, food access	R_1+, R_2
2023/24 - WFP Palestine - Monthly Market Dashboard. WFP. February 2, 2024. February 2, 2024.	Food availability, food access	R_1+, R_2
Yearning for the sea, Gaza's fishermen lament boats wrecked by Israeli forces. MENA. May 6, 2024.	Food access	R_0
WFP Palestine Emergency Response External Situation Report #17 (11 April 2024). WFP. April 16, 2024.	Food availability, food access	R_2
Food prices skyrocket as Gaza on the brink of famine. Christian Aid. March 22, 2024. March 22, 2024.	Food access, food prices	R_0
Health Cluster Dashboard, occupied Palestinian Territory. Health Cluster, April 2024.	Health, disease, health services, casualties	R_1+, R_2
People in Gaza at serious risk of preventable deaths as healthcare crumbles. Médecins sans Frontières, full report. April 29, 2024.	Health infrastructure, health, disease	R_2
oPt Emergency Situation Update 28 (7 Oct 2023 - 20 Apr 2024 at 16:00). WHO. April 29, 2024. April 29, 2024.	Health, disease, nutrition	R_1+
oPt Emergency Situation Update 27 (7 Oct 2023 - 2 Apr 2024 at 16:00). WHO. April 2, 2024.	Health, disease, nutrition	R_1+
oPt Emergency Situation Update 24 (as of 3 March 2024 at 16:00). WHO. March 7, 2024. March 7, 2024.	Health, disease, nutrition	R_1+
UNRWA Situation Report #87 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem - All information from 5–6 March 2024, is valid as of 6 March 2024 at 22:30. UNRWA. March 8, 2024. March 8, 2024.	WASH	R_1+
Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported humanitarian impact, 1 May 2024 at 15:00. OCHA. May 1, 2024. Provides summary statistics from Gaza Ministry of Health and UN agencies on cumulative fatalities, displacement, hospital functionality, and disease.	Health, disease, WASH	R_1+

Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #150. OCHA. April 5, 2024. April 5, 2024. Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #153. OCHA. April 15, 2024. April 15, 2024 Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #156. OCHA. April 22, 2024. April 22, 2024.. Provides information from the UNRWA, Palestinian Water Authority, WFP, and UNOPS on fuel and cooking gas deliveries and availability.	Food utilization (WASH, fuel)	R_1+, R_2
Palestine Impact of the conflict on people with disabilities in the Gaza Strip. Thematic Report. ACAPS. February 14, 2024. February 14, 2024.	Health	R_1+, R_2
Gaza: Israeli Attacks, Blockade Devastating for People with Disabilities. Human Rights Watch. November 1, 2023. November 1, 2023.	Health	R_0
State of Palestine Nutrition Cluster Meeting Presentations. March 26, 2024; April 17, 2024; May 2, 2024.	Health	R_1+
Household Economy Analysis (HEA) Outcome Analysis (OA), FEWS NET, conducted in February 2024, updated in April 2024.	Food consumption (direct evidence)	R_1+
WFP CATI surveys, conducted December-February 2024. December 2023 reports available here; February 2024 findings cited in the IPC FRC March 2024 report. IPC FRC March 2024 report.	Food consumption, livelihood change (direct evidence)	R_1+
Projections of acute malnutrition in the Gaza Strip. Confidential Memo, "Crisis in Gaza: Scenario-Based Health Impact Projections" project (https://gaza-projections.org/). London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health. April 14, 2024.	Nutritional status (indirect evidence)	R_1+
Gaza GAM MUAC Screening Analysis. Elijah Odundo and Dr. Oleg Bilukha, March-April 2024. Elijah Odundo and Dr. Oleg Bilukha, March-April 2024.	Nutritional status (direct evidence)	R_1+
Nutrition Vulnerability and Situation Analysis in Gaza. Updated March 2024. State of Palestine Nutrition Cluster. March 2024.	Nutritional status (direct evidence)	R_1+
Nutrition Vulnerability and Situation Analysis/Gaza. Global Nutrition Cluster. February 2024. February 2024.	Nutritional status (direct evidence)	R_1+
State of Palestine Nutrition Cluster Meeting Presentations. March 20, 2024, and May 2, 2024. Contains the weighted GAM MUAC prevalence in North Gaza governorate.	Nutritional status (direct evidence)	R_1+
Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported humanitarian impact, 1 May 2024 at 15:00. OCHA. May 1, 2024. Includes deaths from malnourishment as reported by the Gaza Ministry of Health. Includes deaths from malnourishment as reported by the Gaza Ministry of Health.	Mortality (indirect evidence)	R_1+
Gaza: Israel's Imposed Starvation Deadly for Children. Human Rights Watch. April 9, 2024. April 9, 2024.	Mortality (indirect evidence)	R_1+
@cogatonline X account. Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories: Judea and Samaria and towards the Gaza Strip.	Food availability	

IPC

Integrated Food Security
Phase Classification

Scan to download the
IPC Technical Manual 3.1

Email: ipc@fao.org

Website: www.ipcinfo.org

theIPCinfo