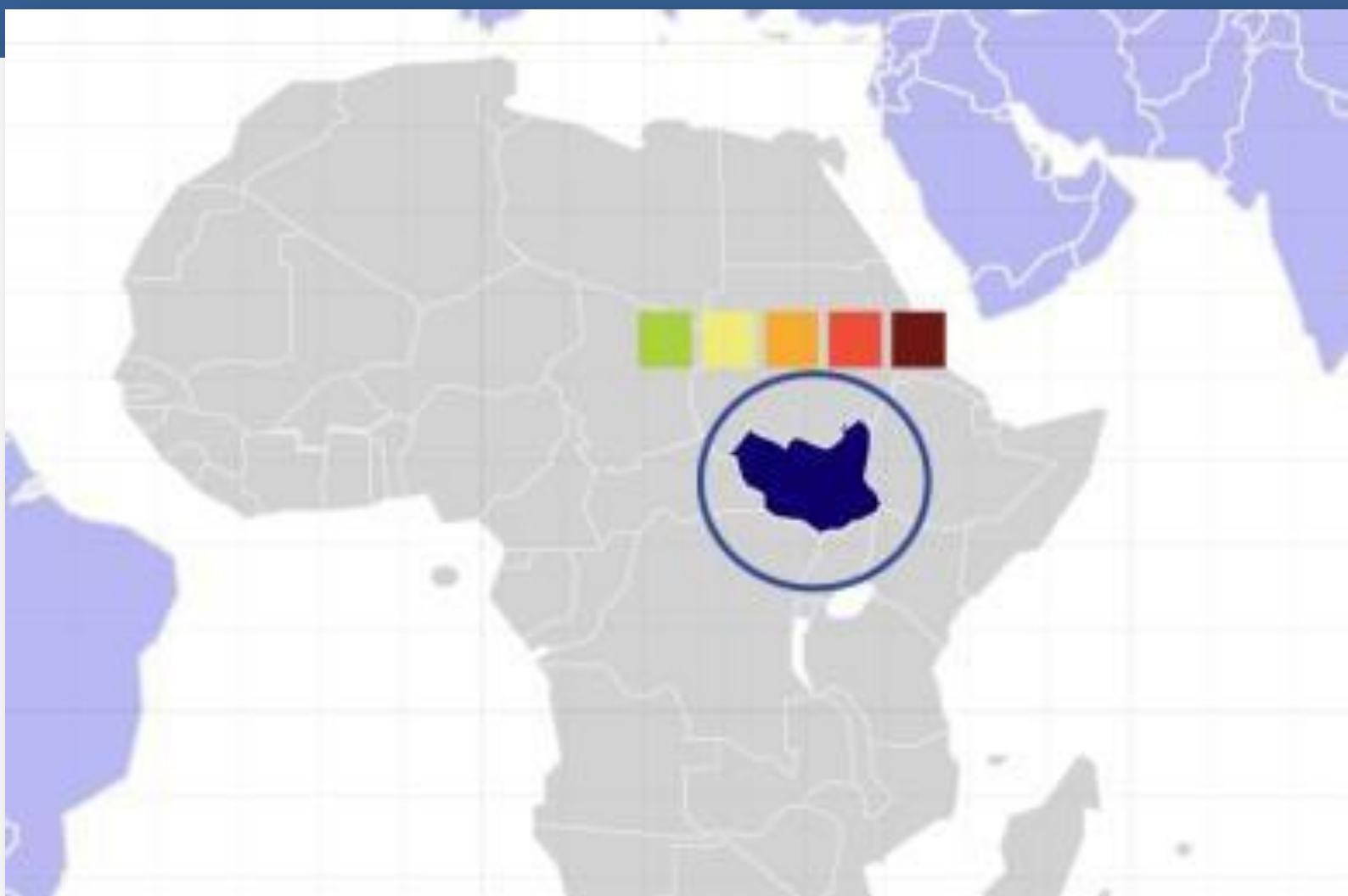




IPC GLOBAL EMERGENCY REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPC ERC) : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SOUTH SUDAN PRELIMINARY IPC COUNTRY RESULTS

4 May 2016



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*The EC in the global partnership is represented by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the teams in South Sudan who sacrificed time and showed personal commitment to make this assessment happen in the middle of trying to respond to a highly complex and ever changing emergency. All involved have made special efforts to build a coherent picture of a complex situation and all have made compromises in the name of collaboration. The result of this work will be key to the lives of the people of South Sudan in their hour of need.

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The IPC Emergency Review Committee (IPC ERC) was activated upon request by the South Sudan IPC Technical Working Group (TWG) and was coordinated and supported by the IPC Global Support Unit (IPC GSU) and by the IPC Global Steering Committee (IPC SC).

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



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the past risk of Famine and the limited evidence available in South Sudan, as well as a highly concerning food and nutrition security situation in South Sudan, combined with the political sensitivity of the situation, the IPC Steering Committee (SC) requested the activation of an IPC Global Emergency Review Committee (ERC).

The ERC activation represents an additional quality assurance and validation step for the IPC Country Team before they finalize and release their IPC results. Other steps of the quality assurance of the SS Country Analysis included support from the IPC Global Support Unit and IPC Headquarters Global Partners (FEWSNET and ACF) in the country analysis, and the Real Time Quality Review Process, carried out by a multi-agency team with representatives of ACF, FEWSNET, WFP and the IPC GSU. The South Sudan IPC ERC was chaired by the IPC Global Support Unit and consisted of four international leading technical food security and nutrition experts. The IPC ERC reviewed the South Sudan IPC Technical Working Group IPC analysis and findings and held consultations with all key major stakeholders, including the South Sudan IPC TWG and Humanitarian agencies working in South Sudan. This report represents the findings of the IPC ERC.

Key Conclusions from the ERC on the South Sudan Preliminary IPC Analysis completed in April/May 2016:

1. The ERC agrees with the IPC SS TWG findings that at this time and **at County and State Level administrative areas do not warrant being be classified as Phase 5 Famine** for either the Current analysis and Projection (April through July 2016).
2. The ERC **agrees with the likelihood of the existence of households in Phase 5 Catastrophe** in the two counties in Unity where the SS IPC TWG identified them, however the ERC cannot comment on estimates due to lacking evidence based justification for the estimates. Furthermore, the ERC is skeptical to agree that no populations will move into Phase 5 in Northern Bahr el Ghazal.
3. The ERC urges the SS IPC TWG to include messages of a continued **“Risk of Famine” in areas where conflict can quickly and dramatically increase** due to a volatile and fragile political situation.
4. Even though innumerable calls have been made to international agencies to strengthen food security and nutrition data collection in South Sudan, which would not have been significantly hampered by insecurity, **the ERC found that the evidence available for analysis was still insufficient to assess the severity of the situation and estimate populations affected with needed accuracy and precision**, especially in areas historically not seen as high priority, such as Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal and thus is concerned about the misclassification of the general severity of the situation and of sub-population groups.
5. The ERC acknowledges the efforts made by the IPC SS TWG to classify all counties with limited evidence and time, but it is concerned about the **limited analysis and assumptions documented to classify severity of the situation and determining the estimated number of population, developing projections and assessing impact of humanitarian assistance** as well as in possible under-classification of phase in some counties (Aweil South and Mayendit) and discarding of CDR from selected nutrition survey.

Conclusions and Recommendations on the South Sudan Preliminary IPC country Results, May 2014

A series of detailed conclusions and recommendations for each key conclusion was developed and are presented in Section IV of this report.

The ERC appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on South Sudan IPC TWG analysis and complements IPC TWG for the significant commitment and participation in the IPC process, what can be noted by the high quality of analysis, especially in the context of the challenging circumstances in South Sudan.

The Government of South Sudan, Donors, and Humanitarian Agencies need to be aware that the situation in South Sudan can deteriorate dramatically and rapidly due to the existing vulnerabilities and unpredictability of the current conflict. The precariousness of the situation should be communicated along the IPC results, and the South Sudan IPC TWG should be highly vigilant in monitoring the evolving situation and be prepared to update the IPC analysis in real time.

The ERC feels that although the best use of available evidence was done, the lack of data and limited knowledge of displacement and impact of conflict impacts is still a major challenge and may have masked the severity of the situation. Although the severity of the situation may be worse than the one concluded, it is on itself severe enough to warrant an urgent and increased humanitarian response to save lives and livelihoods in South Sudan.

I. INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a global, multi-partner innovative initiative to facilitate decision-making with improved food security analysis.

The IPC global initiative is governed and strategically managed by the *IPC Global Steering Committee* which currently consists of 11 major partner members (ACF, CARE, CILSS, EC-JRC, FAO, FEWS NET, the Global Food Security Cluster, Oxfam, Save the Children, SICA and WFP). The IPC is defined by its partnership and the multi-partner nature of the governing and implementing structures at the global, regional and national levels, and by the linkages and cooperation between these three levels.¹

The IPC provides a set of protocols (tools and procedures) to classify the severity of food insecurity and provide evidence and standards for actionable knowledge for decision support. The IPC provides a standardized internationally referenced scale to categorize the severity of acute food insecurity into five distinct phases, that range from minimal or no food insecurity to the most severe category of Famine or Catastrophe. IPC incorporates a meta-analysis approach drawing on evidence-based analysis that includes a broad range of data sets and stakeholders. The IPC has core four functions and each with corresponding protocols and processes. These are: (1) Building Technical Consensus; (2) Classifying Severity and Causes; (3) Communicating for Action; and (4) Quality Assurance. Each function includes protocols and standards to guide food security analysts. By systemizing these core functions, the IPC contributes to developing standards and building capacity of food security professionals². The IPC is developed around field realities and enables this plethora of diversity to be brought together in a systematic manner for decision-makers.

An important and central element of the IPC is a process for building technical consensus among key stakeholders from national governments, UN, NGO, and technical agencies. The purpose of Building Technical Consensus is to enable multi-sectoral experts to provide inputs and reach technical consensus and for key stakeholders to endorse the process. Situations involving food-insecure populations always involve multiple stakeholders, and their actions are much more effective, whether for leveraging resources or for coordination, if there is a technical consensus on the underlying situation analysis.

Reaching an agreed evidenced-based technical consensus on the food security situation is an inherent goal of the IPC process and is important for two main reasons. First, the food security analysis requires expert knowledge from a wide range of disciplines (nutrition, food consumption, markets, agriculture, and others). The technical consensus-based process involves bringing together experts from different disciplines and perspectives to evaluate and debate the evidence. Secondly, bringing technical experts from key stakeholder organizations together in the analysis process ensures that the results of the analysis will be widely accepted and acted upon in a coordinated way³. From the IPC perspective, the classification of the severity of food insecurity is not based on a rhetorical or emotive process. Rather it is a classification based on standards, evidence, and technical consensus.

¹ The Global Partners currently members of the IPC Global Steering Committee are: Action Contre la Faim (ACF) CARE International, CILSS, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, FAO, FEWSNET, Global Food Security Cluster, Oxfam GB, Save the Children (UK&US), SICA/PRESANCA and WFP.

² See Section 1: Introduction, and Sections 4-7, *IPC Technical Manual Version 2.0*, pages 3-5 and 23-63, 2012.

³ Section 4: Building Technical Consensus, *IPC Technical Manual Version 2.0*, page 23-24, 2012.

The **IPC Global Emergency Review Committee (IPC ERC)** is an important global mechanism of the global, regional and national partnership and governance structures. The committee is formed on demand and its activation represents an additional validation step before IPC results are released. The committee is activated as needed to support quality assurance and technical consensus building. It is especially useful in situations of extreme food insecurity where there is the potential outcome of an IPC declaration of Famine (Phase 5); but can also be a useful mechanism in severe emergency situations where there is a break-down in the technical consensus process that is negatively impacting on the ability of decision makers to respond to a crisis.

The committee can be convened by request to the IPC Global Support Unit (IPC GSU)⁴. The IPC GSU forms and activates this committee in support to IPC Country teams to review their IPC results as soon as they are ready and before their release. 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.

The **IPC Global Emergency Review Committee** is a very important validation mechanism for the IPC outputs. Its role in the recent Horn of Africa famine in 2011 was critical in providing confidence in the declaration of famine, in ensuring partners' adherence to the protocols, and enhancing the credibility of the process and outcomes.

RATIONALE & PURPOSE

The purpose of the IPC ERC is to support IPC quality assurance and help ensure technical rigor and neutrality of the analysis. The activation of the IPC ERC provides an additional validation step for the Country IPC Technical Working Groups (IPC TWG), before the release of IPC results⁵. The activation of this committee is recommended, especially when there is:

- The potential outcome of an IPC declaration of Famine (Phase 5),
- A break-down in the technical consensus process.

With the purpose to:

- Provide independent and neutral expert technical guidance to the Country IPC TWG on their IPC analysis results
- Serves as an additional and optional quality assurance step to help ensure technical rigor and neutrality of the analysis
- Supports technical consensus building process on the IPC analysis results, and
- Enhances the credibility of the IPC Country process and outcomes.

II. THE ERC PROCESS OVERVIEW

The IPC Emergency Review Committee (ERC) for South Sudan's Analysis done in April 2016 was activated and convened by the IPC Global Programme Manager of the IPC Global Support Unit (GSU). The IPC GSU served as the chair, secretariat and coordinator of the IPC ERC.

The ERC was composed of four independent technical experts globally recognized as leading technical food security and nutrition experts and with specific technical knowledge and experience in

⁴ The Global Support Unit (GSU), headed by the IPC Global Programme Manager, is responsible for the implementation of the IPC Global Strategic Programme (2014-2016), and reports to the IPC Global Steering Committee. See IPC Governance and Partnership, in IPC Global Brief 2013, September 2013.

⁵ Section 4: Building Technical Consensus, *IPC Technical Manual Version 2.0*, page 23-24, 2012.

the region of crisis. These experts were seen as neutral to the IPC outcome and have not participated in the analysis under review, nor have produced any related analysis or reports for any of the areas classified. The experts included in the ERC are detailed in table 1 below.

Table 1: IPC Emergency Review Committee Composition Matrix

Chair Person: Cindy Holleman, IPC Global Programme Manager				
Country of Analysis: South Sudan				
Date of Analysis: IPC Analysis April 23 – May 1, 2014				
IPC ERC – Members, Independent & External, Leading Experts				
Name	Affiliation	Job Title	Sectors of Expertise	Professional Experience
Nick Haan	Singularity University	Faculty Director, Global Grand. Challenges & Managing Director, Impact Partnerships & Programs	Food Security	20 +
Dan Maxwell	Feinstein Int'l Center Tufts	Professor and Research Director	Food Security	20+
Oleg Bilukha	Center for Global Health/CDC	Associate Director of Science Emergency Response and Recovery Branch	Health & Nutrition	20+
Peter Hailey	UNICEF Somalia	Chief of Nutrition	Health & Nutrition	20+

The IPC ERC Technically reviewed and debated the IPC Country Technical Working Group IPC analysis results of seven counties with the purpose of validating the findings against the IPC V.2.0 tools, protocols and guidance. The selected counties and rationale for their selection is included as table 2.

Table 2: List of counties and rationale for ERC Review

State	County	Area Classification	% of Population in Phase 5	Reason for ERC Review
NGB	Aweil North	Current: P.4 Projected: P. 4	Current: 0% Projected:0%	Mass migration due to food insecurity, borderline acute malnutrition with Famine levels (greater than 25%), state level FS data showing emergency levels in Nov/Dec post harvest period (FCS, 33%, Emergency coping 20% and crisis coping 40%).
	Aweil East	Current: P.4 Projected: P.4	Current: 0% Projected:0%	Mass migration due to food insecurity, borderline acute malnutrition with Famine levels (greater than 25%), state level FS data showing emergency levels in Nov/Dec post harvest period (FCS, 33%, Emergency coping 20% and crisis coping 40%).
	Aweil South	Current: P. 3 Projected: P. 4	Current: 0% Projected:0%	Borderline acute malnutrition with Famine levels (GAM by WHZ 27.3%, GAM by MUAC 8.2%), state level FS data showing emergency levels in Nov/Dec post harvest period (FCS, 33%, Emergency coping 20% and crisis coping 40%). Although current GAM rates are highest historically, the area is typically a high burden area for nutrition as only 59% of children are exclusively breastfed until 6 months, minimal dietary diversity for children is only met by 2% of them, minimal meal frequency also only met by 2% of children, there has been an increased trends to feeding programmes, Vit A supplementation reaches 39% of children and occurrence of disease is high, with 34% of children having fever in 2 previous weeks.
Unity	May-endit	Current: P. 3! Projected: P. 3!	Current: 0% Projected:0%	Very high malnutrition rates GAM (W/H) 26.1%, (MUAC) 9.9%, and high CDR 3.28 (59% due trauma), FS indicators valid at county level showing crisis or emergency (7% severe, 86% moderate HHS, 10% poor FCS)
	Leer	Current: P. 4 Projected: P. 4	Current: 5% Projected:10%	Population in phase 5. Figures show GAM (W/H) 13.8%, (MUAC) 8.4%, CDR 3.16 (56% due trauma) FS indicators valid at county level showing catastrophe conditions or high emergency (57% severe HHS, 14% poor FCS)
	Koch	Current: P. 4 Projected: P. 4	Current: 0% Projected:5%	Population in phase 5. Figures show GAM (W/H) 21.0%, (MUAC) 9.4%, CDR 2.93 (76% due trauma) FS indicators valid at county level showing catastrophe conditions or high emergency (14% severe, 79% moderate HHS, 23% poor FCS)
Western Bahr el Ghazal	Wau ¹	Current: Phase 3 (TBC) Projected: TBC	Not specified	Extremely high malnutrition - (IPC Acute Malnutrition Phase 5: GAM by MUAC >35%, from an Inter-agency Rapid Need Assessment (IRNA). Total of 792 children were screened from five locations with the following results; Location 1: N=272 GAM 44.1%, Location 2: N=74 GAM 13.5%, location 3: N=172 GAM 43.6%, location 4: N=180 GAM 30.6, location 5: N=94 GAM 30.9%)

III. CONCLUSIONS

The ERC identified 5 key conclusions that are discussed in some in this section. Recommendations for each conclusion are identified in Section IV Recommendations.

1. The ERC agrees with the IPC SS TWG findings that at this time and **at County and State Level administrative areas do not warrant being be classified as Phase 5 Famine** for either the Current analysis and Projection (April through July 2016).
 - 1.1 The ERC generally agrees that based on the available current evidence, an IPC Phase 5 Famine should not be classified for any counties.
 - 1.2 The ERC also notes that some available evidence indicates to alarming and Famine-like levels of acute food insecurity, acute malnutrition and death rates, calling for the further assessments, analysis and monitoring of the situation. Some examples of Famine-like evidence include:
 - Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates bordering or passing the Famine levels in areas of Aweil South, Aweil East, Wau, Mayendit and islands of Panyijiar, which cannot be charged to epidemics alone;
 - Crude Death Rates (CDR) of 4.11 death/10,000 people/day with less than 50% of deaths being due to trauma in Koch;
 - Household Hunger Scale (HHS) showing 57% of households with severe levels in Leer.
 - 1.3 The ERC highlights that evidence available for Leer only covers about 45% of the population and did not include most affected swamp areas where IDPs reside. Nonetheless, although analysis can only speculate that the situation is worse in areas which have not been surveyed, the degree of severity of the situation cannot be estimated.
2. The ERC **agrees with the likelihood of the existence of households in Phase 5 Catastrophe** in the two counties in Unity where the SS IPC TWG identified them, however the ERC cannot comment on estimates due to lacking evidence based justification for the estimates. Furthermore, the ERC is skeptical to agree that no populations will move into Phase 5 in Northern Bahr el Ghazal.
 - 2.1 Based on the evidence reviewed, the ERC agrees with the likelihood of population being found classified as Phase 5 Catastrophe.
 - 2.2 The ERC is concerned on how the estimates were done as there was limited evidence and documentation of rationale for estimating number of population.
 - 2.3 Although this is an issue for both estimates of current and projected population, this is especially a limiting factor for projection of the population (see further comments on limitation of analyses under conclusion 6).
 - 2.4 The ERC is concerned that no population have been classified as Phase 5 in South and North Aweil Counties, as the high prevalence of households in Phase 4 already in December would likely indicate that some of those would be demoted into Phase 5 in the lean season. The analysis do not indicate if the absence of population under Phase 5 is based on assessment of available evidence or due to lack of evidence to assess possible percentages of households in Phase 5.
3. The ERC urges the SS IPC TWG to include messages of a continued **“Risk of Famine” in areas where conflict can quickly and dramatically increase** due to a volatile and fragile political situation.
 - 3.1 The ERC agrees that no Famine should be projected by the SS IPC TWG in the most likely scenario. However, the potential dramatic displacement and destitution that can happen any time due to a potential increase in conflict, there is still a risk of Famine occurring within the projected period.

4. Even though innumerable calls have been made to international agencies to strengthen food security and nutrition data collection in South Sudan, which would not have been significantly hampered by insecurity, **the ERC found that the evidence available for analysis was still insufficient to assess the severity of the situation and estimate populations affected with needed accuracy and precision**, especially in areas historically not seen as high priority, such as Northern and Western Bahr El Gazel and thus is concerned about the misclassification of the general severity of the situation and of sub-population groups.
 - 4.1 Despite intensive lobbying for evidence to be collected to inform IPC Acute Classification, the amount of reliable evidence at the needed administrative level is still scarce for most counties.
 - 4.2 Most available evidence was either reliable at State level (for example the Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring assessment – FSNM) or only scattered at county levels (e.g. less than 20 counties with SMART or MUAC screening surveys).
 - 4.3 There are serious concerns over the lack of alignment of estimates of severity of different indicators as in various instances the HHS shows a worse condition in a county (e.g. HHS was worse in Leer with 57% households having a severe score than in Koch, where only 14% of households scored the same) but Food Consumption Score (FCS) shows the opposite trend (e.g. FCS was better in Leer with only 14% scoring low than in Koch where 23% scored poor). This raises concerns on credibility and validity of data.
 - 4.4 Although evidence from the WFP Rapid Survey for Unity conducted in March 2016 provides some evidence at county level, no sample size or methods have been documented thereby making it difficult to rely on provided information. Reports on limited field supervision and lack of access to some areas in one county (Leer) further raise concerns regarding the reliability of this data.
 - 4.5 There was serious missed opportunity of not adding some standard food consumption and food insecurity experience questions, such as the Food Consumption Score (FCS) and the Household Hunger Score (HHS) in SMART surveys
5. The ERC acknowledges the efforts made by the IPC SS TWG to classify all counties with limited evidence and time, but it is concerned about the **limited documentation analysis and assumptions done to classify severity, estimates of populations, develop projections and assess impact of humanitarian assistance** as well as likely under-classification of some counties (Aweii South and Mayendit) and discarding of CDR from selected nutrition survey.
 - 5.1 The ERC acknowledges the great efforts made by the SS IPC TWG to classify 86 counties during a two week period using limited reliable evidence and praise the utility of such classifications for decision making.
 - 5.2 The ERC is concerned about the limited documentation of analysis and assumptions done to estimate populations in different phases and overall area classification. The lacking explanation on the changes (or no changes) of classification and populations estimates done between December and the current analysis, as well as between the current analysis and the projected period and the lacking explanation on how evidence has been used to develop the estimates raise serious concerns on the validity of the estimates.
 - 5.3 The ERC is concerned about how projections were done as the limited documentation of evidence do not allow an assessment of the analyses. Apparently, projections done by the SS IPC TWG does not include analysis of households' purchasing power, terms of trade, increasing conflict, how the major shortfall in grain availability of nearly 400,000 metric tons at a time of economic collapse when imports are rapidly dropping, and the price of food, when escalating rapidly impacting the access as well as other evidence predicating food availability, access, utilization and stability issues which likely unfold and impact on food security outcomes. These analysis are crucial as SS is now entering the height of the lean season (May to July), when people

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are the most dependent on the market for food. Although these should be useful information for projections, none of this appears in the documented IPC projections. In specific, the following were noted about the reviewed areas:

- 5.3.1 Households in Western Bahr al Ghazal rely on markets for almost 70% of their food access—and according to the WFP information presented, over 90% of households will be primarily dependent on markets over the next four months. This means that it is absolutely critical to track the terms of trade between what people have to sell (labor, livestock) and the price of food. It is known that the price of food has inflated rapidly and there is a need to further assess what will happen with the price of labor and livestock. Any significant or sustained drop in terms of trade portends very negative outcomes for the coming period. Available data shows that the price of sorghum is five times what it was this time last year; price of casual labor is about 1.5 times higher; price of farm labor is about three times higher. Prices for the livestock are mostly missing.
- 5.3.2 While Unity state is overall less dependent on markets than some other states, there is still a need to analyze the same contributing factors.
- 5.4 Evidence on famine levels of CDR (CDR > 4.11 with less than 50% of deaths due to trauma) from the SMART survey conducted in Koch in March 2016 by the World Relief was not used because the mortality data has not been cleared by the Nutrition working group, although data on acute malnutrition was validated and used. The CDC representative in the ERC has reviewed the CDR data from this survey and concluded that, although the data is not flawless, the limitations of this dataset is very similar to the those of other datasets that have been cleared and used by the nutrition working group.
- 5.5 Evidence from Aweii South and Mayendit indicates that populations in Phase 4 were underestimated in Current analyses as:
 - 5.5.1 In Mayendit GAM rates is very high (26.1% and with confidence intervals reaching Famine levels), CDR of 3.28 deaths/10,000/day (with 59% of deaths being due to trauma an approximate CDR greater than 1 death/10,000/day would be expected thus passing Phase 4 cut-off). Although some food consumption indicators show only crisis level, the reliability of this data is less strong than of malnutrition and mortality, which at those levels, cannot be explained mainly by disease.
 - 5.5.2 In Aweii South, GAM rates is very high (27.3% and with confidence intervals reaching Famine levels) state level food consumption data from post-harvest period (Nov/Dec 2015) showing alarming levels of inadequate food consumption at that period (33% of households had poor FCS and 23% borderline), and coping strategies being already seen, added to the high reliance on food purchases and the deteriorating terms of trade and increase on prices. Although the area is historically know for high acute malnutrition, poor feeding practices, and high burden of diseases, the current evidence would call for a phase 4 classification.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The ERC agrees with the IPC SS TWG findings that at this time and **at County and State Level administrative areas do not warrant being be classified as Phase 5 Famine** for either the Current analysis and Projection (April through July 2016).
 - 1.1 The SS IPC TWG should implement a “rolling monitoring IPC update” to ensure that real-time evidence is used to support revisions of IPC Classifications for Areas and Populations for key priority areas. Priority areas may include a sub-set of areas where some evidence were found with famine-like levels (e.g. Aweil South, Aweil East, Koch, Wau, and Mayendit) counties where evidence is very limited or biased (e.g. Leer), highly affected counties (such as those classified with populations in Phase 4 > 20%), those in high-conflict or volatile, those where humanitarian access is restricted or any other areas or vulnerable groups identified by the TWG.
 - 1.2 The SS IPC TWG should look at further analyzing the HHS as per the FANTA/FEWSNET guidance of scores 5 and 6 to indicate Phase 5 and score of 4 to indicate Phase 4 as this is the only indicator that can distinguish most severe levels of acute food insecurity. This will be especially important for counties that have high severe HHS, such as in Leer.
2. The ERC **agrees with the likelihood of the existence of households in Phase 5 Catastrophe** in the two counties in Unity where the SS IPC TWG identified them, however the ERC cannot comment on estimates due to lacking evidence based justification for the estimates. Furthermore, the ERC is skeptical to agree that no populations will move into Phase 5 in Northern Bahr el Ghazal.
 - 2.1 The IPC SS TWG needs to better document assumptions and undergo stronger analyses done to estimate populations in the different phases. Especially, the SS IPC TWG should answer why there are population in Leer and Koch countries being classified in phase 5, when there is no any other groups of population is in the same Phase in other counties with similar severity levels.
 - 2.2 The IPC SS TWG should assess the food insecurity and malnutrition conditions for specific livelihood or other socio-economic grouping with known percentages (e.g. IDPs, poorest etc.) as to support stronger estimation of populations.
 - 2.3 In order to strengthen estimation of populations in Phase 5 Catastrophe, especially for projected periods, the TWG may need to look at the *distribution* of the data for FCS, HHS, CSI and asset related coping strategies, GAM as well as crucial evidence on contributing factors, such as access to markets, price trends, reliance on food purchases and closely examine how these indicators behave for the most vulnerable groups.
3. The ERC urges the SS IPC TWG to include messages of a continued **“Risk of Famine” in areas where conflict can quickly and dramatically increase** due to a volatile and fragile political situation.
 - 3.1 The SS IPC TWG needs to clearly communicate that Famine can happen at any time in some areas if conflict increases and there is limited humanitarian access and response to provide needed assistance. The messages should also indicate how the overall situation can be changed dramatically and quickly.
4. Even though innumerable calls have been made to international agencies to strengthen food security and nutrition data collection in South Sudan, which would not have been significantly hampered by insecurity, **the ERC found that the evidence available for analysis was still insufficient to assess the severity of the situation and estimate populations affected with needed accuracy and precision**, especially in areas historically not seen as high priority, such as Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal and thus is concerned about the misclassification of the general severity of the situation and of sub-population groups.
 - 4.1 The SS IPC TWG needs to carry on highlighting the urgent need to conduct food security, SMART nutrition and mortality survey in priority counties, particularly those with

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humanitarian access. . Priority information includes those relating to households access to food, nutrition, mortality, conflict, displacement, food consumption and livelihood change. It is necessary to ensure that future IPC Analysis include a significantly stronger analysis of the impact of the conflicts and security situation to populations' access to food. This is particularly important for the areas where much of the population depends on markets.

- 4.2 In the counties where security situation does not allow conduct of surveys identify NGO partners working on the ground and technically support planned MUAC screenings or rapid assessments to ensure that relevant areas are included.
 - 4.3 There is a need to better integrate food and nutrition assessments in South Sudan. All surveys and assessments should ensure that basic food security, malnutrition and mortality data is collected.
 - 4.4 Agencies that carry out food security surveys, such as WFP, should better document their methods and field challenges as well as make their data available for validation and assessment of reliability. At global level, there is a need to engage partners in developing some form of validation of food security surveys similarly done for nutrition assessments.
5. The ERC acknowledges the efforts made by the IPC SS TWG to classify all counties with limited evidence and time, but it is concerned about the **limited documentation analysis and assumptions done to classify severity, estimates of populations, develop projections and assess impact of humanitarian assistance** as well as likely under-classification of some counties (Aweii South and Mayendit) and discarding of CDR from selected nutrition survey.
- 5.1 A stronger analysis of trends on contributing factors than extending estimates of current indicators into the future is needed. The SS IPC TWG should make clear statements on the assumptions on the unfolding situation of contributing factors, indicating the extent of people dependence on market, impact of increase of prices, increasing conflict, predicted access issues and normal seasonality patterns in hot-spot counties.
 - 5.2 Fast track validation of evidence on CDR from World Relief Smart Survey done in Koch as to include it in this current analysis if possible. In the future do not discard these kind of crucial evidence based on lacking validation of the survey.
 - 5.3 The SS IPC TWG should re-assess the classification of Mayendit and Aweii South and revise it to Phase 4.