



Amidst a country lockdown due to COVID-19, Tropical Storm Amanda hit El Salvador on May 31 causing considerable damage to main roads and infrastructure nationwide. The COVID-19 emergency in El Salvador will further be aggravated due to the damages caused by Tropical Storm Amanda, increasing the number of families already in food insecurity and dire conditions. As a result, WFP is preparing to further scale-up its emergency operations to reach an additional 153,500 people over the next two months. In the photo: In a school that has been turned into a temporary shelter, WFP staff distribute meals to families who have lost their livelihoods. Photo: WFP/David Fernandez

World Food Programme

Security Division

## Weekly Covid-19 Security Situation and Outlook

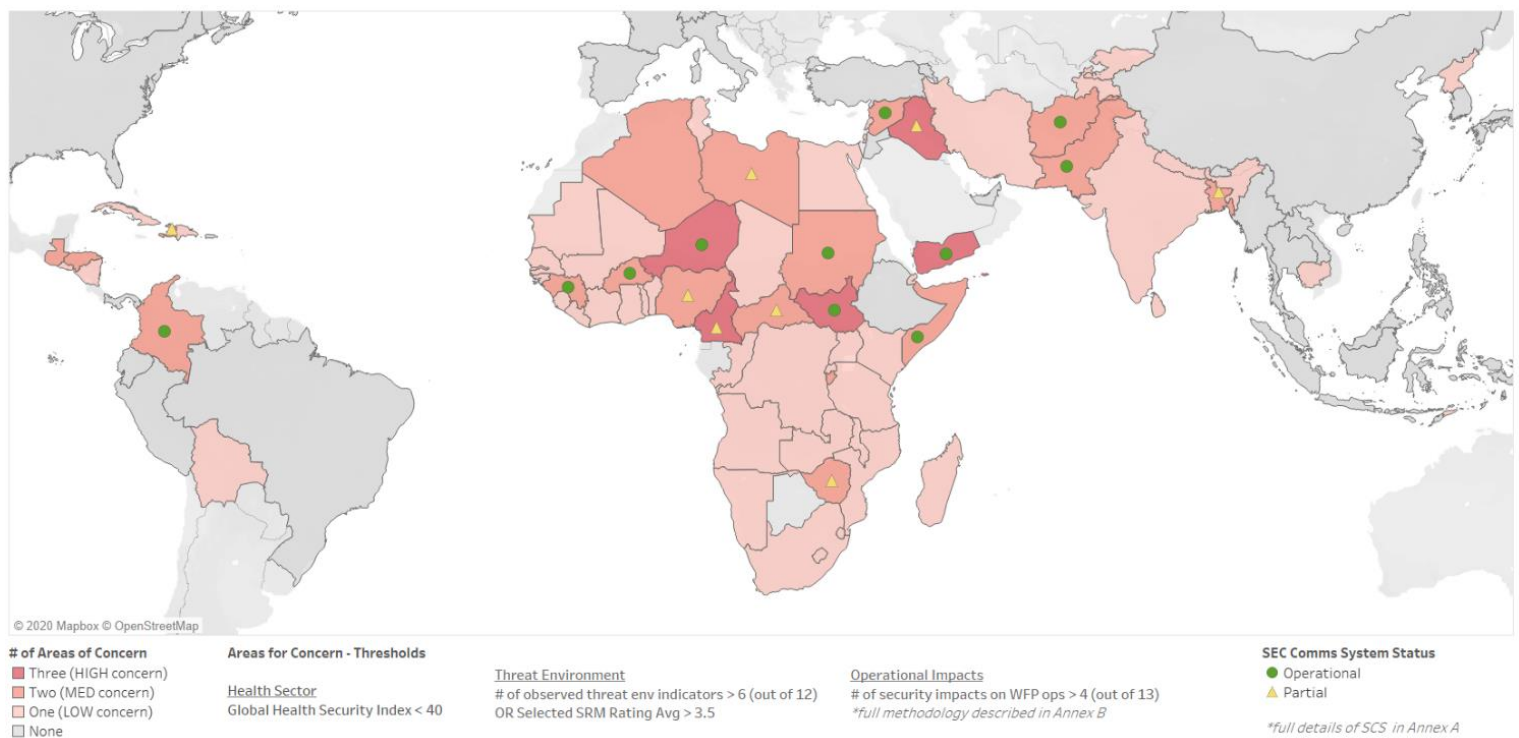
11 June 2020

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## Report Highlights

- This week five countries are rated as having high Security-COVID-linked concerns (Niger, Cameroon, South Sudan, Iraq, Yemen) and a further 18 countries have medium Security-COVID concerns.
- A notable change from last week is that Colombia has moved from low to medium concern (caused by the emergence of COVID-related security incidents involving humanitarian personnel). Lebanon, Mozambique and Myanmar remain under increased monitoring, while not captured by the analysis due to specific situations in the COVID-19 context.
- While Central and South American countries remain 'intense zones' for COVID-19, South Asia is emerging as a new hotspot, with India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh all registering notable increases in cases.
- Civil unrest remains the prevailing security threat category most affected by COVID-19 and likely to directly impact humanitarian personnel and operations, although armed conflict continues unabated in affected countries, sustaining indirect threat levels.

## Countries of Security Concern



## Global Security Situation Outlook

Following the recent WHO statements about the severity of the pandemic in South and Central America, South Asia is now also becoming another hotspot for COVID-19 (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan) while several other countries are seeing rapid increases in case numbers (Nepal, Iraq, Libya, Ethiopia, Haiti, CAR, Malawi, Yemen, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar's Rakhine State). Nevertheless, the security situation outlook remains largely unchanged while threat environments continued to evolve.

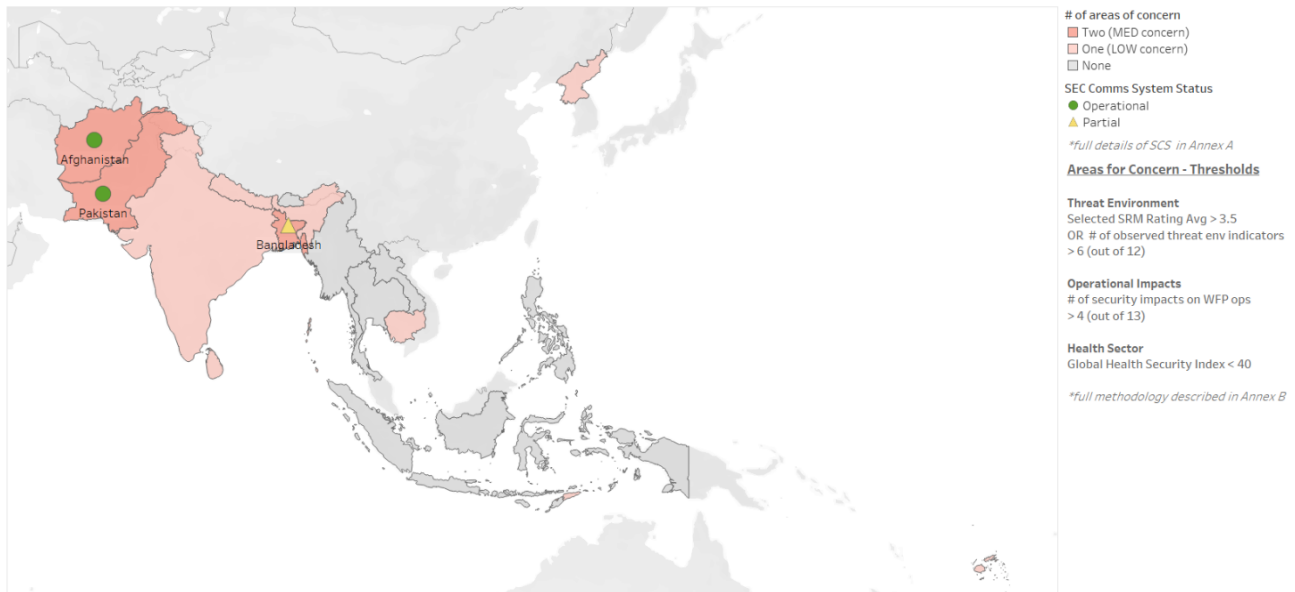
Anti-government demonstrations continue in various countries, with participants citing dissatisfaction over COVID-19 related movement restrictions and lack of actions taken by authorities to mitigate the economic fallout of the pandemic. Many of these demonstrations, and attempts by authorities to enforce containment measures, have resulted in violence (Indonesia, Lebanon, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Haiti), and further unrest is highly likely in some, if not all, of these countries. The week under review saw some of these manifestations of discontent having an impact on humanitarian operations (Colombia), but the potential for future similar incidents remains extant in any location where unrest is likely. Meanwhile, the reduction of government-imposed COVID-19 movement restrictions holds the potential to unleash inter-communal tensions in some areas (India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palestinian Authority, South Sudan, Ethiopia).

In addition to civil unrest and inter-communal tensions, the already volatile political landscape of several countries continues to be further destabilized by the uncertainty and unrest surrounding COVID-19. This is true for those countries with elections on the horizon (Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Dominican Republic, Bolivia); high levels of strife between ruling parties and the opposition (Nepal, Burundi); unformed and transitional governments (Iraq, Sudan, South Sudan); or the illness/death of key leaders suspected of having contracted COVID-19 (South Sudan, Burundi). These factors will continue have the potential to impact the security environment, should relationships between political parties, security services, and/or the citizenry breakdown.

For those countries already facing significant challenges, armed conflict continues to appear largely unaffected by COVID-19, as violence continued or increased in several countries (Afghanistan, Libya, Yemen, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, CAR, Cameroon, Mozambique). Further conflict is expected in these countries and may also increase in other countries (Mindanao/Philippines, Republic of the Congo).

As previously reported, the economic impact of the pandemic, exacerbated by movement restrictions necessary to prevent continued spread of the virus, is driving an increase in criminality in many areas where social safety nets are weak. Spikes of thefts and robberies have been reported in several countries (Lebanon, Libya) and humanitarian personnel have not been entirely shielded from such events (Haiti, Malawi). Similarly, anti-refugee sentiments continue to be of concern (Lebanon, Syria, Libya) as do negative attitudes towards foreigners and/or those associated with COVID-19 or its response (Yemen, Mozambique, DRC, Haiti).

## Asia



### Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context – NO CHANGE

- **Bangladesh** and **Pakistan** are of MEDIUM concern due to the prevailing security threat environments, in which crime and civil unrest can affect humanitarian operations.
- **Afghanistan** is of MEDIUM concern due to the ongoing armed conflict affecting the country.
- While the majority of **Myanmar** remains of low concern due to COVID-19, it remains under monitoring due to the deteriorating threat environment in Rakhine and Chin States caused by escalating armed conflict, as well as concerns over civil unrest.

### Security Situation Outlook

South Asia has emerged as a new global hotspot for COVID-19 as the **number of confirmed cases surged in India and Pakistan**, that recorded largest single-day increases in coronavirus infections last week. **Myanmar's** Ministry of Health announced the first confirmed case of an COVID-19 infection in Maungdaw, Rakhine state, which is predominantly inhabited by the Rohingya, therefore raising concerns about an outbreak within packed IDP camps. The case also highlights the risk of a further spreading of the pandemic through illegal border crossings between **Bangladesh** and **Myanmar**.

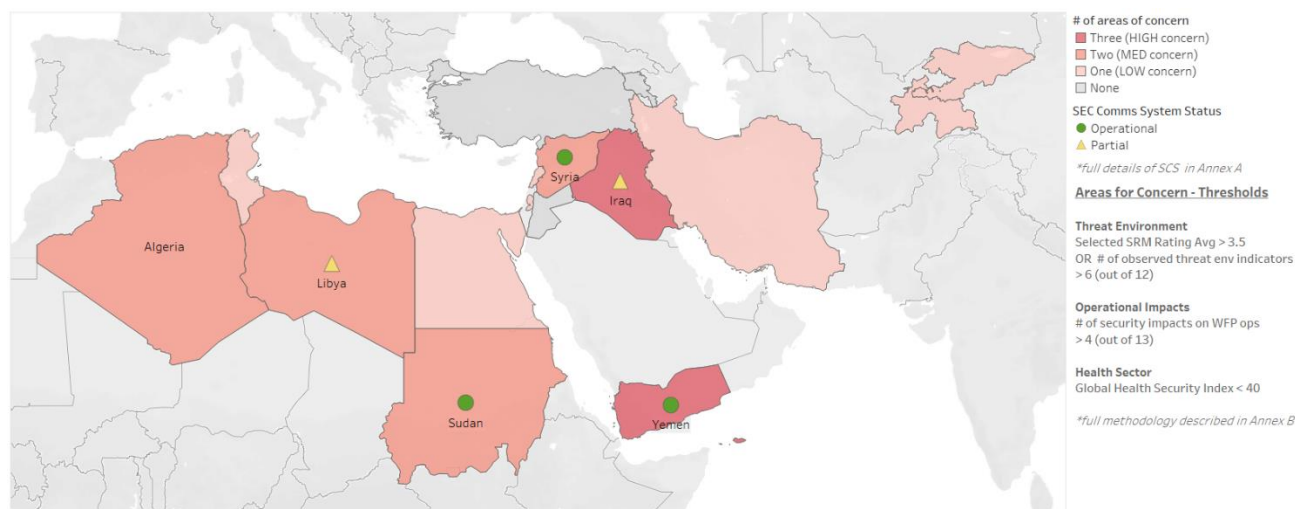
Regionally, the reopening of places of worship poses serious concerns in terms of spreading COVID-19, as well as contributing to inter-communal tensions in the coming months, particularly in **India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar** and **Pakistan**. In **Afghanistan**, an increase in violence followed the temporary (one-week) ceasefire, including the BBIED attack on a mosque in Kabul, incidents in Badakhshan, Zabul, Nangarhar and other provinces. The visits by the US Chief Negotiator to Pakistan and planned visits to Qatar and Afghanistan suggest that intra-Afghan peace talks could commence in the coming weeks. Recent reporting also indicates that at least the first round of talks will be held in Doha, where US-Taliban peace talks have

been conducted. Should intra-Afghan talks commence, the use of violence is highly likely as a leverage at the negotiating table.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the date of general elections (supposed to be conducted in November) has not yet been set in **Myanmar**, drawing increasingly criticism mostly from the opposition. The persistent armed conflict and violence in Rakhine and Chin States also call into question to what extent polls can be conducted properly. **Sri Lanka** could be headed for a second constitutional crisis if the country's President continues to refuse to reinstate the old Parliament, with elections repeatedly delayed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Elections are expected to be held in late July or early August, with the Election Commission yet to announce a new date. In **Nepal**, the management of the COVID-19 pandemic is causing increasing political tensions as the country's biggest opposition party challenges the Government over the spending of funds for the outbreak. In **Indonesia**, there were sporadic incidents of civil unrest due the population's dissatisfaction over the COVID-19 related cash payments, funeral protocols and testing procedures. Meanwhile, the announcement by the Government in **the Philippines** to continue counter-terrorism operations despite COVID-19 is likely to lead to further clashes in Sulu/Mindanao between the military and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), an Islamic State affiliate.



## Middle East



## Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context – NO CHANGE

- **Iraq** and **Yemen** are of HIGH concern due to their extant security threat environments, marked by the protracted armed conflict and impact of COVID-19 on security operations
- **Libya** and **Syria** are of MEDIUM concern, with security threat environments dominated by armed conflict that is preventing a unified and fully resources response to the pandemic.
- **Sudan** is of MEDIUM concern due to the weakness of the health care systems and multiple impacts on humanitarian security operations due to COVID-19. The recent decision by the Government to re-allow entry into the country for international humanitarian personnel may alleviate the pressure on current international staff in-country.
- **Algeria** is of MEDIUM concern due to assessed weaknesses in the health care system and the standing threat posed by civil unrest, although this has been reduced in recent months.
- **Lebanon** remains on watch, despite not having formally returned scores that would put it in MEDIUM or HIGH categories. The main reason for this is the high potential for flaring up of civil unrest, and the presence of refugee camps which are at elevated health risk for COVID-19.

## Security Situation Outlook

While **Libya**, **Yemen** and **Sudan** are still struggling with efforts to contain COVID-19 amid poor medical facilities and lack of relevant personnel, limited testing and allegations of politically-motivated interference in the dissemination of figures, other countries in the region are assessing the cost/effects of COVID-19 on their economies as economic activities are being resumed. The **easing of restrictions** aimed at

mobilising revenue for government, as well as improving employment opportunities for citizens and income for employers has **revived protests movements/civil unrest** to voice concern over their grievances. Ongoing **protests in Iraq and Lebanon are likely to be energized while Algeria, Tunisia, Iran and the Palestinian Authority can be expected to see growing protest movements in the short to medium term**, as previously assessed.

In **Lebanon**, this resurgence of unrest has already been witnessed this reporting week as hundreds of demonstrators took to the streets of Beirut and other cities on 06 June to voice discontent over the Government's handling of the economic crisis aggravated by COVID-19, as well as to demand reforms. Riots reportedly left over 40 people injured. Recalling the level of unrest in Lebanon prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, and the continued unresolved negotiations with the IMF, the protest movement is very likely to continue to escalate in the coming weeks.

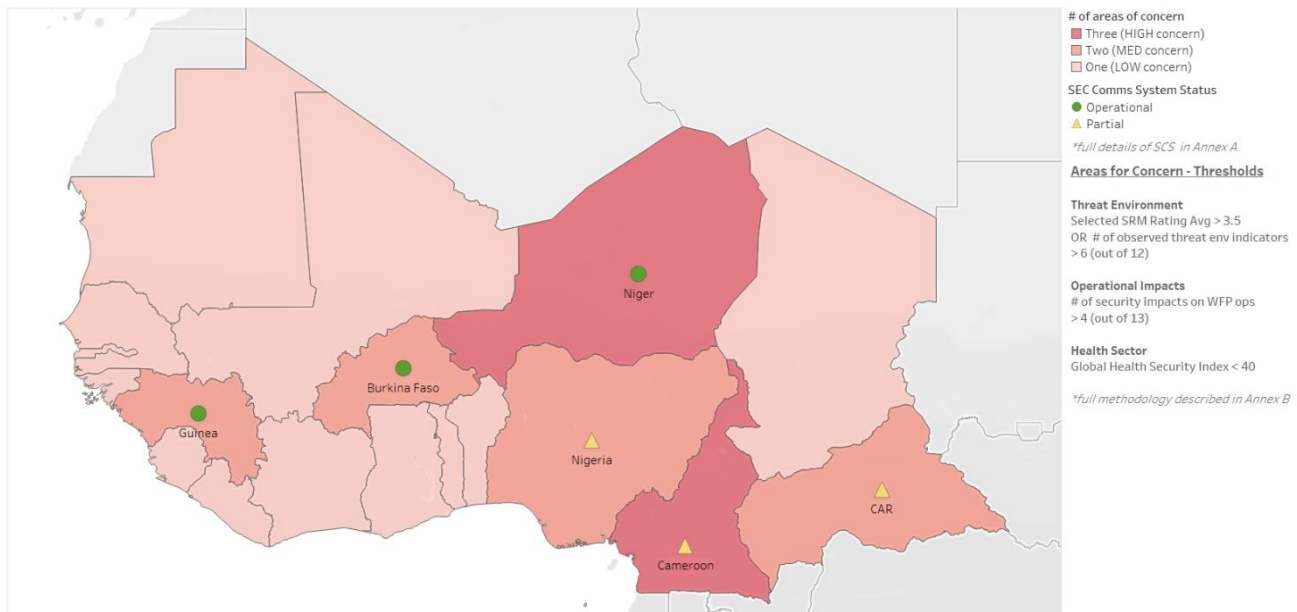
In **Iraq**, violent enforcement of COVID-19 measures has been reported as security forces blocked several popular suburbs to prevent further spread of the outbreak. This followed comments by Health Ministry officials blaming the spread of COVID-19 on the lack of public adherence to the restrictive measures, particularly social distancing, and calling on security forces to step up enforcement of these measures; as such, **further unrest and associated violence are likely**. These events took place against the background of the Prime Minister's plans to fill vacant ministerial posts, with his nominations having now received parliamentary support. It is hoped that moving forward on stabilizing the country's leadership will allow progress to be made on addressing the national counter-terrorism efforts. While the Islamic State continues activities such as the targeting of power transmission lines this week, increased counter-terrorism operations – supported by the US-led coalition – are expected in western and central Iraq in the coming months.

The number of cases of COVID-19 in **Libya** has spiked this week, but the Government of National Accord (GNA) remained unmoved to pivot away from the ongoing armed conflict, rejecting the so-called Cairo initiative of a ceasefire and political process. Following several significant military setbacks in the past weeks as a result of the recent offensive by GNA and their Turkish-aligned supporters, the Libyan National Army has agreed to the Egyptian proposal, but there are yet no signs as to whether this will gain traction and if the resumption of the talks within the framework of the UN-facilitated 5+5 Joint Military Commission will lead to a ceasefire any time soon.

Demonstrations this week in al-Suwayda (southern **Syria**) holding the President and Iran responsible for economic hardships and deteriorating security conditions were unexpected since the area is considered a government stronghold. Meanwhile, as the security forces continue to wrestle with active Islamic State cells in Sokhna near Hama and around Deir Ezzor, a reported increase of Syrian Arab Army forces in southern Idlib and airstrikes in the north-east this week suggest a possible offensive in the near term. Armed conflict unrelated to COVID-19 remains the most pressing threat in the Syrian context.

Finally, reports of **anti-refugee sentiments** continue in Lebanon, Syria, and Libya, while **anti-foreign sentiments** have also been reported in Yemen. A sharp **rise in criminality** (thefts and carjacking) has been noted in **Lebanon and Libya**, potentially linked to changing COVID-19 movement restrictions.

## Western Africa



## Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context – NO CHANGE

- **Cameroon** is of HIGH concern due to the prevailing security threat environment, particularly in North West/South West Regions, and security operations impacts, most notably the inability of authorities to reliably provide security at delivery sites and the disruption of access negotiations.
- **Niger** is of HIGH concern due to the prevailing security threat environment and security operations impacts.
- **Burkina Faso** is of MEDIUM concern due to security operations impacts, particularly the inability of authorities to reliably provide security at delivery sites. Further to the deterioration of the operating context, any new analysis is likely to result in elevated security threats and prompt a shift to HIGH concern.
- **Nigeria** and the **CAR** are of MEDIUM concern due to the prevailing security threat environment (armed conflicts), while **Guinea** is also of MEDIUM concern due to the risk of civil unrest or crime likely to have an impact on humanitarian operations in the country.

## Security Situation Outlook

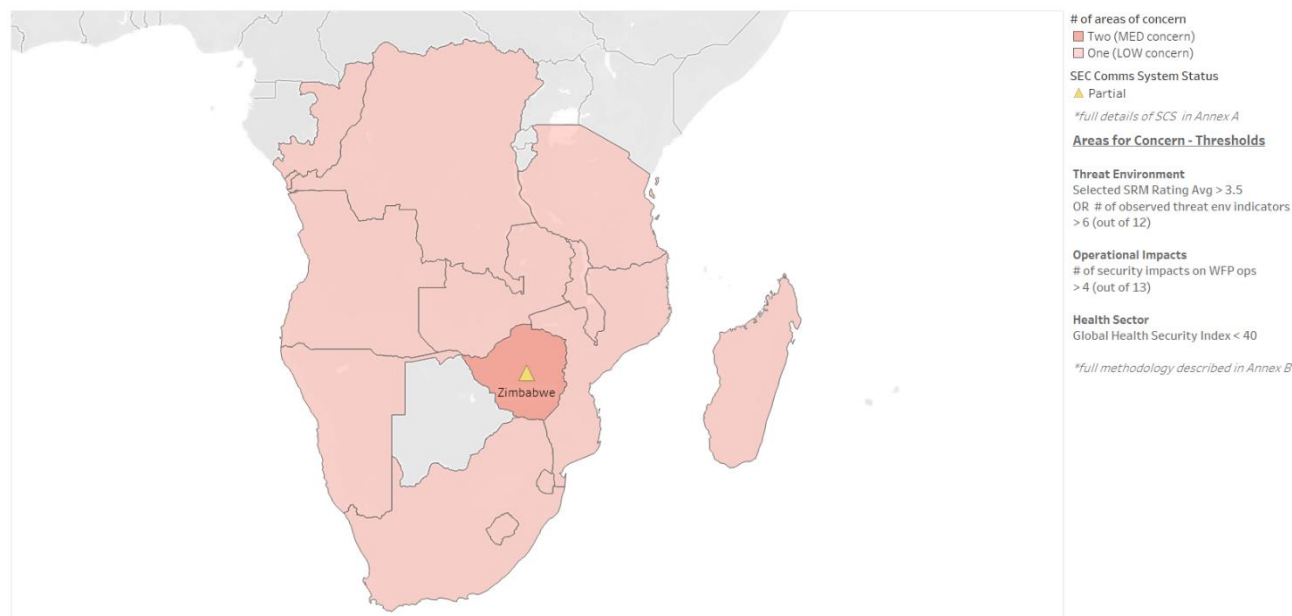
The general situation in the region as it relates to COVID-19 was relatively calm during the week under review, with the easing of government restrictions continuing. Nonetheless, the fragile security environment prevails in much of the region, especially in light of recent security developments in **Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, CAR** and **Cameroon**. **Civil unrest remains the most likely direct threat stemming from COVID-19**; however, secondary impacts to the economy are also driving some significant **acts of criminality** while **activity by non-state armed groups continues unabated** as security services' capacity remains hindered by the need to assist with the pandemic response measures.



In **Senegal**, a series of violent demonstrations and riots started on the night of 02 June in the city of Touba (Diourbel Region) and spread the next day to Kaolack and several districts of Dakar. Protesters demanded the lifting of the restrictions imposed as part of the state of emergency state declared in response to COVID-19. Vehicles, including a Red Cross ambulance and a firefighter's truck, were set ablaze along with the regional station of a private radio in Touba, and tyres burned on a public highway in Pire (70 km from Dakar, in Thiès Region). Several people were wounded while more than 200 others were arrested. The Government responded by lifting the intercity transport ban, easing restrictions on public gatherings, and reducing the curfew hours. It is likely that these changes will dampen some of the discontent in Senegal related to the restrictions for the time being, but the potential for its resurgence will remain as the population will continue to push for freedom of movement.

The Government in **Mali** is facing particularly strong opposition. An estimated 70,000 protesters gathered in Bamako on 05 June to demand the resignation of the President over the Government's handling of the multi-dimensional crisis faced by the country, which has been compounded by the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. The Government is notably accused of holding legislative elections (29 March, 19 April) despite the threat posed by COVID-19 in a bid to ensure it keeps a majority of seats in the National Assembly by capitalizing on low voter turnout and cancelling results in several voting stations. As a reminder, violent street protests in several cities including Bamako, Kayes and Sikasso only waned with the lifting of the countrywide curfew on 09 May. Given that the civil unrest in Mali is linked to wider security and governance issues, it is unlikely to abate in the near future regardless of changes to COVID-19 containment measures.

## Southern Africa



### Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context – NO CHANGE

- **Mozambique** is of LOW concern countrywide; however, this concern rises to MEDIUM for Cabo Delgado due to the prevailing security threat environment in that province.
- **Zimbabwe** is of MEDIUM concern due to the risk of crime adversely affecting humanitarian operations.

### Security Situation Outlook

**Crime and civil unrest remain the primary threats** throughout the region, as previously assessed. Incidents of criminality are increasing in the region, with the growing number of thefts and robberies and expected to remain commonplace. As borders remain closed and the prolonged nature of the COVID-19 pandemic increases pressure on those most in need, incidents such as the burglaries at the homes of humanitarian workers in Lilongwe (Malawi) remain likely.

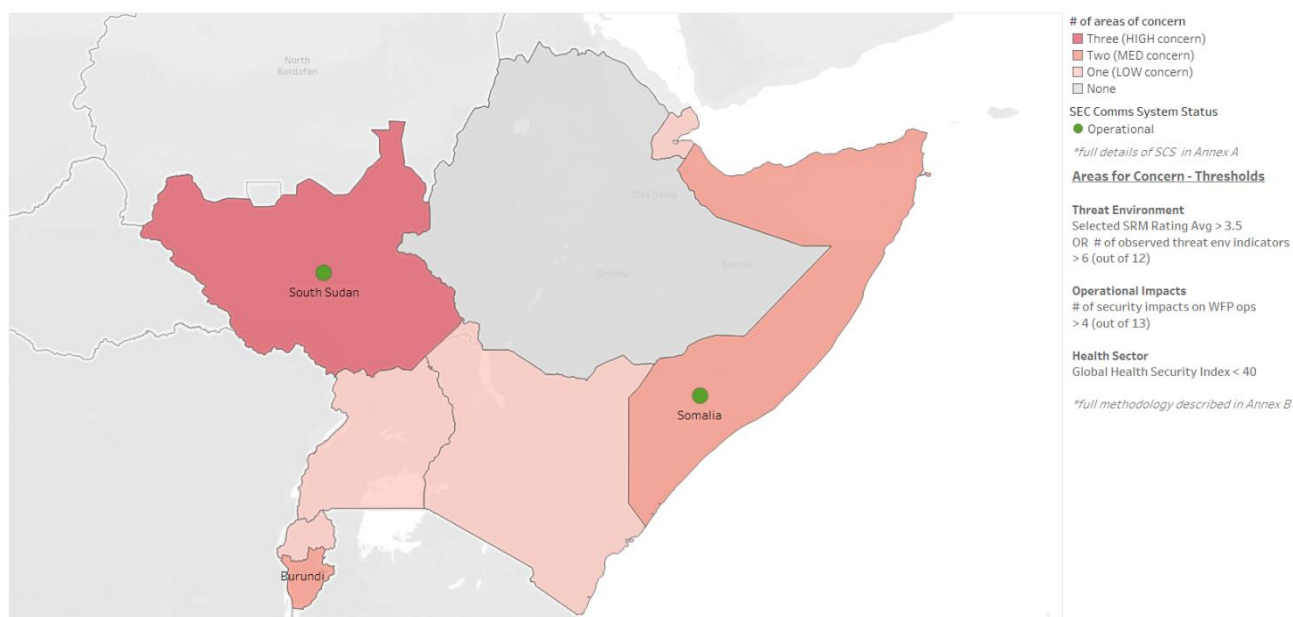
Violent enforcement of containment measures and repression by security forces are also ongoing, with **lockdown measures generally unchanged** through the region, although some Governments are considering changes to measures due to the economic deterioration and the impact it is having on their populations. In **Zimbabwe**, a spike in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases was followed by intensified efforts by security forces to enforce lockdown measures. According to the Government, these actions were related; however, these actions were interpreted as precautions by the authorities against possible protests over the arrest of a lawyer aligned to the main opposition party. Travel to Harare downtown has been particularly affected due to security checkpoints and the need for exemption letters to pass through them. These types of restrictions – sometimes even for personnel supposed to have authorization to travel – may continue in those countries where Governments are seeking to strictly control the population and may indirectly affect humanitarian activities.

This political facet of the pandemic has also been seen in **Tanzania**, where the President declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be over on 08 June. However, there continue to be allegations that hospitals and health facilities are under pressure not to communicate information on COVID-19 cases. Further, links have been drawn between an opposition leader's assertions that the Government of hiding the truth regarding the pandemic and an attack this week that left him with a broken leg. These and other signs of outbreak denial by the authorities have caused many people to **avoid discussing the pandemic on the phone or in public to avoid reprisal**. Given the political tensions that are expected in the lead up to the October 2020 elections, more acts of intimidation of the opposition or even members of the public are very likely, particularly should the outbreak significantly worsen. With Tanzanian truck drivers being a supposed prime vector for the disease, the position of neighbouring countries towards Tanzania also stands to deteriorate and stigmatization of Tanzania nationals in general remains a less likely, but possible outcome.

Meanwhile, tensions in the Pool region of the **Republic of the Congo** are steadily increasing. COVID-19 movement restrictions have affected the region by preventing the movement of agricultural products to markets in Brazzaville, seriously impacting the local economy. Moreover, the sale of agricultural products is reportedly one of the main sources of income for ex-combatants, who were already discontented with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. The recent deployment of the military into the Pool region has been viewed as provocative and communities are reportedly fleeing what they perceive to be impending clashes.

Finally, **resentment towards people infected with the virus or working for response and/or prevention activities** is on the rise. In **Mozambique**, unconfirmed reports started circulating in the past days regarding threats towards people suspected of being infected with COVID-19, particularly around Beira (Sofala province). Local sources have confirmed that this threat is not specific to any nationality, but there remains no clear indication that attacks are likely to be carried out as long as the number of reported cases remains relatively low. However, this issue could spread to other provinces, including the two that have the most cases: Maputo and Cabo Delgado. In the **DRC**, some reports mentioning violence against COVID-19 response workers in Kinshasa surfaced in late May, with health workers threatened by groups of angry people claiming the virus did not exist. Given the parallels with previous disease (i.e. Ebola) outbreaks in the country, there remains a potential for further violence, particularly towards those participating in COVID-19 response activities. Given the overlap between these concerns and the activity by non-state armed groups in these countries, further **hindrances to humanitarian access to beneficiaries is likely**.

## Eastern Africa



### Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context

- **South Sudan** is of HIGH concern due to the prevailing security threat environment, which is dominated by acts of criminality and inter-communal violence that affects humanitarian operations, and the impact of COVID-19 on operations, such as access issues generated or exacerbated by COVID-19.
- **Somalia** is of MEDIUM concern due to the prevailing security threat environment and continued armed conflict and terrorism threats.
- **Burundi** is also of MEDIUM concern due to the crime and unrest variables of the security threat environment.

### Security Situation Outlook

The peace process and persistent inter-communal tensions in **South Sudan** continue to be negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Similarly, political and inter-communal rifts in **Ethiopia** are being exacerbated by the outbreak. In **Burundi**, the sudden death of President Nkurunziza has not been definitively linked to COVID-19, but in light of the previously reported political tensions, the outlook for Burundi is less predictable. Elsewhere, there has been no other significant change to the Security Situation Outlook for Somalia, Uganda and Rwanda compared to previous weeks.

Experts in **South Sudan** have reportedly raised concerns that the weak healthcare system will be unable to manage the country's caseload. Meanwhile, government-imposed containment measures have adversely affected the peace process. The Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM) is reportedly being impeded from timely monitoring and verification of reported violations of the ceasefire and transitional security arrangements. Moreover, in addition to the reduced interaction of the Transitional Government, since several senior leaders have contracted COVID-19, the unification and deployment of forces has also been delayed as most of the

forces are confined in cantonment and training sites. **Continued delays in the peace process** may result in agitation and/or actions by some stakeholders to take advantage of the situation to instigate chaos, including the **possibility that some non-state armed groups will renewing their activities** and pose security threats. Given this and the persistent inter-communal violence such as the one seen recently in Jonglei state, lockdowns of UNMISS camps due to COVID-19 (such as the one in Bor) may prevent UN peacekeeping forces from promptly responding to ensure security in areas where humanitarian agencies operate.

Meanwhile in **Ethiopia**, several fatal incidents linked to the implementation of the state of emergency measures were reported in Chiro, Gemechis and Qobo of East and West Hararghe zones in Oromia region. Newly recruited Oromo special police and local militia members have allegedly been attacking and killing civilians. Opposition leaders have accused the country's Prime Minister of using the COVID-19 outbreak to artificially prolong his mandate after he ruled out forming a transitional government once his mandate expires in early October. As such, **further incidents of civil unrest and clashes are highly likely**.

Speculations as to the likely link between the sudden death of **Burundi's** President from cardiac arrest and his wife's treatment of an unspecified illness in Kenya are pointing to COVID-19. In the immediate aftermath of his death, the situation has been reported as calm, despite an increase in the number of checkpoints and patrols throughout the country. In accordance with the Constitution, the President of the National Assembly was sworn in as interim President on 09 June. The President was due to be succeeded by President-elect Evariste Ndayishimiye of the ruling CNDD-FDD party, after having been declared the winner the 20 May presidential elections. It is likely that the President-elect inauguration (scheduled for 20 August) will now be advanced in an attempt to eliminate any power vacuum. Such a move might not be supported by the opposition and could therefore trigger protests. Further illness among the country's leadership could further increase political stability risks and lead the main opposition National Congress for Liberty (CNL) party leader (and unsuccessful presidential candidate), to resort to proclaiming himself as President. Developments in the coming week will reveal any signs of such a scenario.



## Central and Southern America



### Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context

- **Colombia** is up from LOW to MEDIUM concern due to the large number of prevailing security threats in humanitarian operational areas, and the recent COVID-19-related security incident, directly affecting operations in Arauca Department.
- **Haiti, Honduras and Guatemala** are of MEDIUM concern due to their prevailing security threat environments, where civil unrest and crime bear the potential for major impacts on humanitarian operations.

### Security Situation Outlook

There has been an alarming increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, particularly in Haiti and Peru, where health systems are struggling to contain the spread of the virus. The state of national emergency has been extended in Peru, Honduras, Colombia while stringent restrictive measures have been imposed in **El Salvador**. In **Bolivia**, the authorities warned of re-instating quarantine measures, if deemed necessary.

The week under review reaffirms that **civil unrest remains a major threat for the region** in the COVID-19 context as protests have increased amid deepening effects of the pandemic, notably in **Panama, Chile and Colombia**. Pre-COVID-19 manifestation of popular discontent in massive demonstrations and associated incidences of violence has not faded away, with a likelihood of resurfacing due to worsening economic situation exacerbated by COVID-19, particularly in **Colombia, Bolivia, Haiti and Ecuador**.

A **humanitarian mission was briefly affected by roadblocks and protest staged in Colombia's Arauca Department by Venezuelan migrants**, claiming humanitarian aid due to the quarantine measures and inability to return to their country following the border closure. Meanwhile, the reported loss of 5.4m jobs due to measures (including lockdowns) to combat the COVID-19 outbreak in the country

is exacerbating pre-existing grievances among Colombia's population and is likely to drive civil unrest in the short and medium term. Protests over socio-economic grievances have already been reported in Bogota and Cucuta while crime gangs continued fighting for territorial control. Increased activities by armed groups are likely to cause further impediments to humanitarian access to remote communities. In addition, police are using excessive force against those not complying with COVID-19 restrictions.

In **Panama**, union workers staged protests in capital city against the Government's decision to reopen the country's economy amid concerns that it is too premature as the number of cases continue to rise. Unions are also demanding better assistance for those affected by job losses due to COVID-19, as well as denouncing alleged corruption in the use of state resources to address the pandemic. In **Haiti**, the authorities called for a postponement of protests scheduled for the weekend to avoid further spread of the coronavirus. In a worrying development, **police personnel staged a protest** in Port-au-Prince to demand better living conditions, allocation of funds for their newly created union and alleged harassment of their leader. There are concerns that police protests might return to the scale seen before the COVID-19 outbreak, which could further degrade the capacity of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to ensure law and order (the HNP is under-staffed, poorly equipped and trained, wages are low and salaries are frequently not paid on time).

On a positive note, **violent street crime has significantly decreased** in countries of the region due to COVID-19 lockdowns and curfew; however, such crime could resurge with the easing of restrictions.

## Other regions



## Current security concerns in the COVID-19 context – NO CHANGE

- No countries are of significant security concern

## Security Situation Outlook

**The week under review saw continued protests against police brutality and racism** across the United States, albeit characterized by lower levels of violence and riots compared to the previous week. Night-time curfews have been in place for most of the reporting week in multiple locations and have been lifted recently.

A campaign in solidarity with the protests in the US has spread globally as demonstrations took place in **Italy, Denmark, Belgium, France, Germany, the UK, Switzerland, Canada and Brazil**, among other countries. While they were mostly peaceful, episodes of violence, riots and looting have been registered in different countries. In **Italy**, clashes between police and a group of far-right anti-government protesters have occurred in Rome, following confrontations between demonstrators and journalists. Protesters allegedly used flares and bottles to chase away the journalists, prompting police to disperse the gathering. Anti-government protests were also reported in Milan.

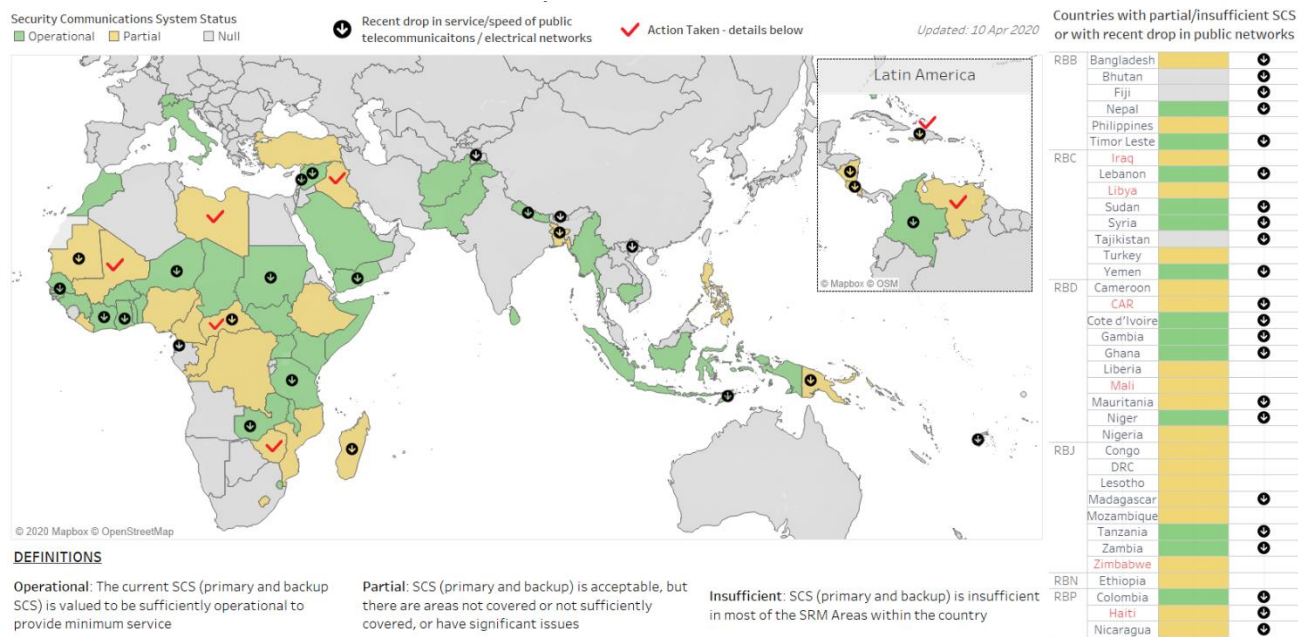
In general, **the wave of protests** over the past two weeks has raised concerns over non-adherence to anti-COVID-19 health measures, in particular social distancing and use of masks, which **might lead to a future spike in cases**. The WHO has urged demonstrators taking to the streets to take precautions against contagion as the pandemic is far from being over.

The **risk of cyber-criminal activity** (especially fraud of COVID-19 related items and scams) **is expected to remain elevated**, and European countries have therefore foreseen a programme of collaboration between their law enforcement bodies.

**The likelihood of extremist/terrorist acts remains low** although terrorist groups can resort to manipulating the narrative about the global pandemic in order to attract new sympathizers. As noted in previous weeks' reports, lockdown measures have resulted in increased time spent on the internet and online communication, thus heightening the risk of lone-wolf attacks and recruitment, fostered by online

propaganda. In **Spain**, a man has been arrested on suspicion of radicalization and for dissemination of jihadist extremist propaganda via Internet. The suspect used his computer expertise to anonymously access radical jihadist content and communicate directly with foreign fighters in Syria.

## Annex A: Communications Systems Status



\*\* NB. The evaluation is based on basic physical SCS infrastructures, applications and procedures and is an assessment as to whether there is an acceptable minimum SCS available (infrastructure, applications and procedures). It does NOT rate the status of implementation of the TESS recommendations.



## Annex B: Methodology

**1. Global Health Security Index rating.** This is on scale of 100. Countries with a rating below 40 are highlighted as being of 'health concern'.

**2. Threat Environment.** Two measures are used, either of which can identify a country as being of 'threat environment concern':

- **SRM Threat Level.** The average of two threat levels from the SRM is used: civil unrest, plus either conflict or crime, depending on which is more relevant to humanitarian operations in each country's context. For those countries with multiple SRM areas, the average across all areas is used. Those countries with a final averaged level of 3.5 or above are highlighted.
- **Threat Environment Indicators.** Countries with 6 or more indicators of a deteriorating threat environment are highlighted. The indicators monitored are: Anti-Gov't unrest; Violent enforcement of COVID measures; Expression of anti-foreign sentiments; Expression of anti IDP/refugee sentiments; Attacks on foreigners linked to COVID; Attacks on IDP/refugees linked to COVID; COVID-related intercommunal violence; Looting of commercial centres due to shortages/lawlessness; Looting of humanitarian assets due to COVID shortages; Increase in threats/robberies due to shortage/lawlessness; Political destabilization due to COVID outbreak

**3. Security Operations Impacts.** Countries with 4 or more impacts to security operations are highlighted as being of 'security operations concern'. The list of recorded impacts includes: Crowd control challenges due to COVID panic; Operations impeded by Gov't COVID restrictions; Bureaucratic impediments due to COVID response; COVID-linked security Incidents; Disruption of outsourced security services; Authorities unable to provide location security; Authorities unable to provide movement security; SEC Staff shortages causing operational disruptions; Access negotiation impeded; civilian-military deconfliction functions reduced; Over 50% of security personnel positions affected by vacancy, leave, illness, government-imposed quarantine, or remote working out of country.

## Disclaimer

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