

SUDAN Food Security Outlook Update

August 2010

Heavy rains cause floods but prospects for a good harvest remain high

- In Northern Sudan, the lean season has reached its peak in July/August and moderate to high levels of food insecurity are likely to continue up to October. Highly food insecure populations are concentrated in North and South Darfur State, Red Sea State, Abeyi locality in South Kordofan State, Hamarat Al Sheikh, and Sodarie localities in North Kordofan State. Moderate food insecurity persists in West Darfur and parts of Kassala, North and South Kordofan, and Blue and White Nile states.
- Heavy rains during July/August in Northern Sudan have raised the prospects for above-average harvests, although they have also caused localized flash floods across the country. Above-average rains are expected to continue, at least through September, due to the recently declared La Niña event.
- In Southern Sudan, the food insecure population remains concentrated in Jonglei, Warrap, and Northern Bahr el Ghazal. However, the harvest and consumption of early crops of maize and groundnuts have begun in many areas in Eastern Equatoria, Lakes, Warrap, Unity, Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal states, marking the end of the lean season.
- Initial findings of rapid crop assessments conducted across Southern Sudan during August 16-26 indicate that rainfall and crop performance in 2010 are better than last year and that there is increased land under cultivation compared to 2009. This raises optimism for an improved harvest, with the exception of areas affected by LRA insecurity in Western Equatoria, and areas of earlier than normal or excessive flooding, namely the lowlands of Aweil West and South, Twic East, Awerial/Aliap, and central parts of Jonglei State. A Crop Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) expected to take place in October will help establish a more accurate picture of 2010 crop harvests.

Figure 1. Most likely food security outcomes, August-September 2010

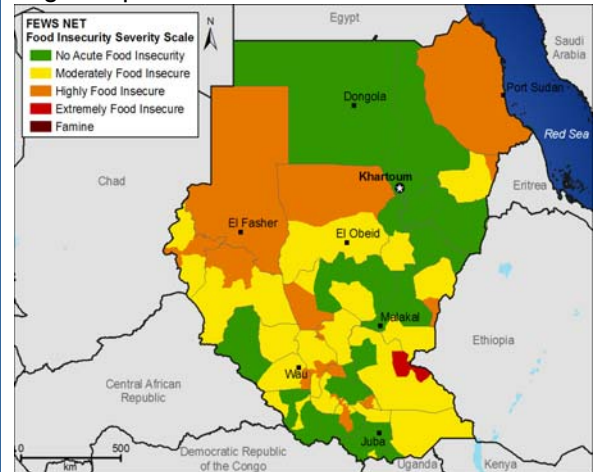
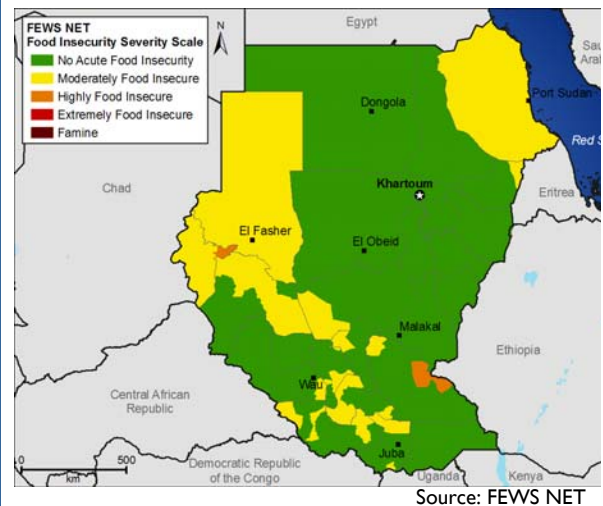


Figure 2. Most likely food security outcomes, October-December 2010



For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale.

Updated food security outlook through December 2010

Moderate and high levels of food insecurity are expected to continue in **Northern Sudan** up to October. Food stocks at household and market levels will remain low through September, and dependence on the market for food purchases will remain high. Insecurity and conflict in Darfur continue to hamper IDPs' cultivation and access to normal coping strategies (e.g. seasonal labor migration and wild foods collection). The main areas of concern are Darfur region, Red Sea state, and parts of Blue Nile, Kassala, South Kordofan, North Kordofan, and White Nile states. Food security should improve in October due to the harvest, reduced grain prices, improved road conditions, income from the sale of cash crops, and access to more

This report provides an update to the July 2010 FEWS NET Food Security Outlook report which estimated food security conditions in Sudan through December 2010. The next Outlook report will be released in October and will cover the October 2010 to March 2011 period.

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labor opportunities).

Grain prices have continued to increase, as projected in the July Outlook. July/August grain prices in most markets were substantially above June levels and almost double the five-year average. In Damazine market (Blue Nile State), the average price of sorghum in July was almost double the five-year average and 36 percent above the 2005/2006 price (Figure 3). This increasing trend in prices is expected to continue until the October harvest.

Prices of non-cereal food commodities have increased as well, due to reductions in supply to most states in Northern Sudan because recent floods have raised the cost of transport. In addition, insecurity along the road between central Sudan and Darfur has reduced market supplies in Darfur. Meat prices remain high due to demand for protein sources during the holy month of Ramadan and export of livestock to Gulf States and parts of Asia. The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) estimated the July inflation rate in Sudan at 13 percent, which would reduce access to food by poor households with limited income opportunities.

Above-average rains are expected to continue in both Northern and Southern Sudan, at least through September, due to the recently declared La Niña event. La Niña events are associated with wetter-than-normal conditions in some parts of the western and northern sector of East Africa. Above-average rains could improve crop and livestock conditions but also increase the risks of flooding, soil erosion, and seasonal disease prevalence. Flash floods have been experienced in many areas in Northern Sudan. Khartoum, Al Jazeera and Kassala State have been most severely affected, while White Nile, Blue Nile, Senar, North Darfur, Gedaref and North Kordofan states have also been affected. The Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) estimates that the total number of people affected by floods to date in Northern Sudan is about 120,000–168,000. Floods have also destroyed 42,000–60,000 houses, partially affected 78,000–180,000 houses, and caused deaths of humans and animals, loss of assets (e.g. livestock), and crop damage. Due to the high risk of continued floods along the Blue Nile, White Nile, River Nile, and Al Gash Rivers, residents of areas near these rivers have been advised to remain vigilant.

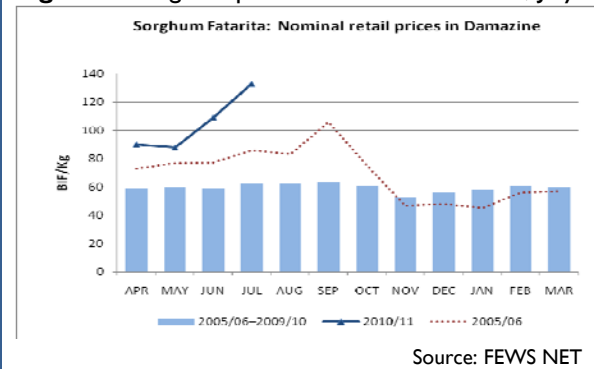
Overall, the good rainy season throughout most of Northern Sudan, relative calm security conditions in parts of rural areas in Darfur during the main cultivation months (July/August), improved access to credit in some parts of the country (mostly outside of Darfur), and the reduction of the GFD ration in Darfur have positively contributed to increased area cultivated this season. The cultivated crops are at vegetative growth stage and progressing well, with the exception of some dry spell pockets in Blue Nile State.

However, insecurity in other areas of **Darfur** (areas of recent/ongoing conflict) is expected to have negative impacts on food security up to December 2010, mainly by reducing access to affected populations by humanitarian agencies. Concerns include increased tension between the main parties of the Government of National Unity over the January 2011 Southern Sudan referendum; the tense situation in some IDP camps (e.g. Kalma IDP camp in South Darfur and Hamiedia camp in West Darfur); high tension in Abeyi area; the risk of clashes between GoS and the Justice and Equity Movement in Darfur; and continued fighting among rebel groups in Jabal Mara and between Messeriya and Aezeighat Arab rivals.

Food security in **Kalma camp** (South Darfur) is expected to worsen due to fighting between supporters and opponents of the Al Doha peace talks. A growing number of IDPs have fled the camp to seek security in nearby towns (e.g. Nyala town, Beliel). Local authorities recently granted access to humanitarian agencies. In spite of reconciliation between Messeriya and Rezeighat Arab rivals in July, fighting between the two groups erupted recently in **Kass locality**. This could further affect cultivation and result in more displacement to Zalingi and Nyertiti in West Darfur and to Kass town in South Darfur.

In **Southern Sudan**, food security conditions are improving in areas where the harvest of early crops of maize and groundnuts has started, especially in **Eastern and Central Equatoria** (Hills and Mountains), **Western Bahr El Gazal** (Ironstone Plateau) and **Northern Bahr El Gazal** (Western Flood Plains Zone). In most parts of these areas, rainfall has been above average and better than in 2009, though dry spells of varying duration or localized flooding have occurred in some areas, with impacts ranging from minimal to moderate. Food security in these areas is expected to significantly improve at the end of September to mid-October, when the main short-cycle sorghum harvest will be at its peak or just concluded in

Figure 3. Sorghum prices in Damazine market, July



the most food insecure areas. As mentioned above, the expectation of continued above-average rainfall in Sudan due to the La Niña event could have positive impacts on performance of long-cycle crops, especially sorghum. The extended rains also forecast improved access to fish and good pasture and water for livestock in the next dry season. On the other hand, the risk of additional flooding increases, especially in the Eastern, Western, and Nile-Sobat flood plain zones. Due to the above-average rains and good crop performance to date, overall prospects for crop performance better than last year are high across Southern Sudan. This implies improved food security conditions during 2011, but only if security remains stable during the pre- and post-referendum period. The referendum is scheduled for January 9, 2011.

The price of sorghum remains stable in most markets. There has been a significant decline in sorghum prices in Northern Bahr El Gazal's main market of Aweil, attributed to the increased level of food aid interventions and improved food flows from Northern Sudan. The implementation of a government tax exemption, declared in mid-May for essential food commodities, has also likely contributed to sorghum and maize price reductions or stabilizations, though the exemption does not seem to be in effect in all states. Reports from Northern Bahr El Gazal suggest that price reductions may also be attributed to the availability of cheaper government food stocks. In key reference markets of Aweil and Wau, where the harvest of early maturing crops has started, sorghum prices are likely to remain stable until they decline significantly when short-cycle sorghum is harvested in October.

Sorghum prices in Malakal market have reportedly increased due to insecurity along the Nile involving illegal taxation to allow passage of commodities. Sorghum prices in Lakes markets have also increased because of insecurity related to interethnic cattle raiding conflicts. The price of livestock is generally stable across all markets, except in Aweil, where prices of bulls and goats have slightly declined though they are comparable to the four-year average. Generally, livestock and pasture conditions are good except for areas affected by East Coast Fever, particularly Awerial, Bor and Eastern Equatoria.

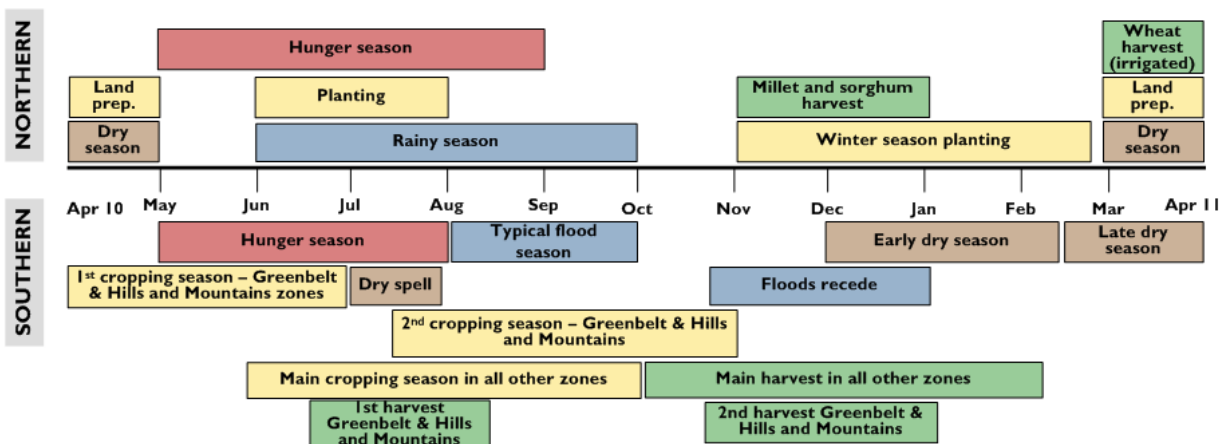
In **Western Flood Plains Zone (Northern Bahr El Gazal State)**, where most households are moderately food insecure, consumption of early crops of groundnuts and maize has started. For most poor households, food security conditions will improve significantly in October with the peak harvest of short-cycle sorghum. The crop is currently in good condition between vegetative and flowering stage, except for locations where flooding has occurred, such as Aweil South and parts of Aweil West. Most farmers cultivated more land compared to last year, and a better harvest than 2009 is likely, assuming that rainfall remains favorable. Generally livestock and pasture conditions are good except in flooded areas. Here, people have moved livestock to the highland areas.

In **Eastern Flood Plains (Upper Nile and Jonglei States)**, a prolonged lean season is likely in most areas. In Malakal, Fashoda and Panyinkang areas, rainfall was fully established late, i.e., in July instead of June, and delayed planting and the expected harvest by one month. Currently, maize is in the flowering stage while most of the sorghum is in vegetative stage. Typically, households would be consuming maize at this time. In the far eastern areas of Wadakona and Maban, cropping conditions were timely, and households are reported to be consuming maize now.

In **Akobo, the lowlands of Pibor, Ayod, Wuror, Duk and Twic East Counties**, earlier than normal flooding reported in July is likely to have affected crop development, which is expected to result in delayed and reduced crop harvests. These areas were not covered by the August rapid crop assessments. Of most concern are the food insecure areas of Akobo, Wuror, Nyirol, and Bor counties, and the neighboring pastoral zone of Lokongole in Pibor County, where food shortages are expected to persist up to the October harvest. Most food insecure people are those that recently returned to their homes after a year of displacement in Akobo Town, as well as those that arrived in Akobo from Wanding in Nasir/Luakpiny County in May-June. These households returned too late to prepare land, and available labor will be divided between re-building their homes, clearing land, and other essential activities. These households are expected to continue facing moderate to high food insecurity, even during the immediate post-harvest season (October–December). Parts of Pibor County are likely to remain moderately insecure due to persistent local or internal insecurity associated with armed militia and external aggressions with their northern neighbors of Wuror, Nyiror and Akobo counties.

In the **Greenbelt zone**, LRA insecurity and displacements persist, with the latest attacks in early August in Nzara. As of July, 40-50,000 displaced people were concentrated in Nagero County (Namutina payam) and Yambio County (Source Yubu and Yambio Town), with some in the town centers of Nzara, Ezo, Ibba, and Maridi. These attacks have left some areas such as Sangua and Basukangbi completely deserted. An estimated 3,000 people have fled and abandoned sorghum and groundnuts that are ready for harvest.

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET