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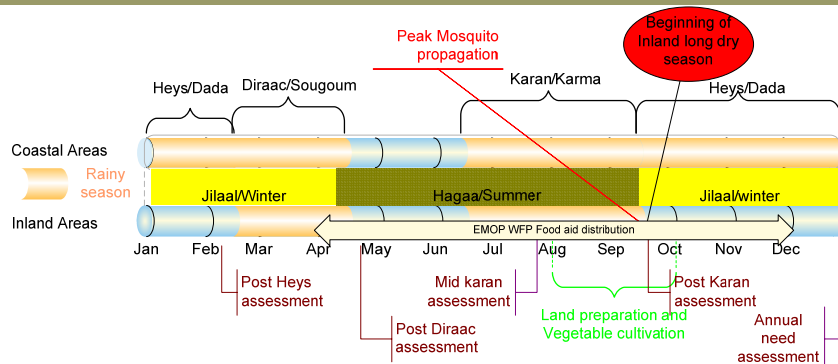
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#### Summary and implications

Although the food security situation for pastoralists is currently satisfactory, the *Heys/Dada* rains, essential for the viability of coastal dry season grazing areas, performed very poorly (less than 20 percent of average in many areas) in November. These rains serve a vital function in the migration cycle of pastoralists: by replenishing pasture, browse and water points along the coastal belt, they support the nutritional status of small ruminants during the important period of early pregnancy. The WFP Emergency Operation (EMOP) will continue to provide food assistance to 47,500 drought affected pastoralists through December 2006, to be succeeded by Food for Work activities designed to build assets. Recovery programs must take a longer view for the rural Djibouti population: livestock losses in 2004-05 ranged from 25-80 percent in Djibouti (according to the February 2006 multi-agency drought impact assessment), and successful recovery for pastoral communities requires prevention of distress livestock sales and continued restocking over several consecutive seasons.

Food security for the urban population has been bolstered by recent economic growth, fueled principally by construction of new port facilities as well as tourist and banking facilities. For lower-income urban households to gain access to the resulting employment, however, may require skills training. Although staple food prices are declining, the cost of fuel (kerosene) is still very high; additionally the depletion of market stocks of staple foods (especially rice and spaghetti) may trigger food price increases in the next several months.

#### Seasonal timeline



#### Current hazard summary

- In contrast to the generally positive Intergovernmental Authority on Development Climate Outlook Forum (IGAD COF) outlook, the *Heys/Dada* rains performed poorly (less than 50 percent of the 1996-2003 average) in November.
- An outbreak of the livestock disease known locally as *Sougudud* in neighboring Shinile Zone, Ethiopia, may lead to spread of the disease to Djibouti via migration of cattle. *Sougudud*, caused by a blood parasite that is transmitted by ticks, is associated with a 30-50 percent case fatality rate according to the governmental veterinary department.
- In the absence of adequate prevention measures, a sharp seasonal rise in the incidence of malaria is expected.



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## Food security summary

According to field reports, migration of pastoralists to the coastal plains began in October, earlier than normal. Pastoralists and their herds have reportedly arrived at the *Heys/Dada* grazing areas around Wea and Holl-holl, traveling from Geustir (Djibouti) and even from as far as Abdulkadir (Somaliland). If rains continue in November, pastoralists in Dikhil District (Djibouti) and Daouenleh (Ethiopia) are expected to migrate as well. Two populations for whom migration is quite limited are residents of the Central Highland Livelihood Zone, because of sufficient availability of browse and pasture locally, and the Northwest Pastoral Livelihood Zone, who tend to assemble around permanent local water points to avoid the long migration to the coast.

The extended coastal grazing period in Arta District may increase the risk of depletion of vegetation and water before the February/March rains conclude the dry season and allow the return to inland grazing areas.

Animal body conditions are generally satisfactory outside the Northwest Pastoral Zone, where pasture and browse have been insufficient. An outbreak of a livestock disease known locally as *Sougudud* has been reported in the neighboring Shinile Zone of Ethiopia. This serious disease, with a 30-50 percent case fatality rate, may be transmitted to Djibouti herds, both inland and coastal, via the seasonal transhumance.

Improved livestock terms of trade, together with the intensification of charcoal sales fueled by urban demand, have boosted the income of pastoral households in the Southeast and Central Livelihood Zones with sufficient labor power to meet the physical demands of charcoal production. Additionally, the reemergence of the salt trade around Lac Assal (Central Livelihood Zone) will further expand casual labor opportunities for poor pastoralists in the area.

WFP continues to provide a full ration for 47,500 rural drought affected beneficiaries under the current EMOP. WFP has reported that the EMOP will terminate at the end of December 2006, at which point WFP plans to transition to Food for Work (FFW) activities (e.g., establishment of garden plots, construction of wells and work on date palm plantations). While developmental activities are broadly preferable to direct food assistance, program design and implementation planning should consider the fact that prevention of distress livestock sales, and recovery of livestock assets, requires consecutive good seasons for affected households in pastoral communities.

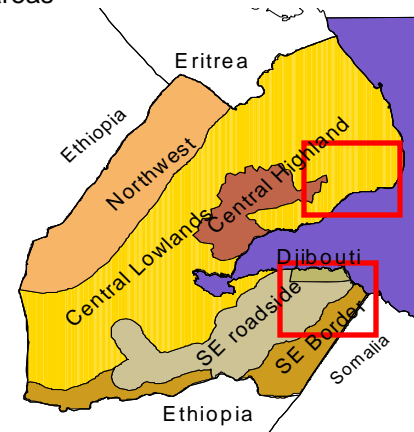
## Natural resource situation (rainfall, water and pasture)

October marks the onset of the *Heys/Dada* rains, which are light coastal showers associated with moist offshore winds originating in the Arabian Sea. These showers are normally heaviest in the mountains of Mabla and Goda, north of Tadjourah, and in the more elevated areas of Arta and Ali Sabieh districts. The *Heys/Dada* rains are very important to the regeneration of browse and pasture and replenishment of water points in the *Heys/Dada* grazing areas, which in turn sustain herds during the long July to February inland dry spell. Satellite images (Figures 1 and 2) confirm that the rains received across Djibouti during October were below normal, in contrast to the IGAD COF forecast.

The coastal belt around Djibouti City received less rainfall in absolute terms than the coast of Tadjourah. In major grazing areas of the districts of Arta and Ali-sabieh, total rainfall accumulated was from 1-10 mm, and is estimated to be 5-20 percent of the short term average (1996–2003). The southeast edge of the central lowlands, the maritime façade of the central highlands and the foothills of Moussali Mountain received more rainfall (40-80 mm) during October. It is still too early to draw conclusions about the performance of the *Heys/Dada* season, which extends through February. However, field reports indicate that the rains did not extend beyond Wea in the south and Bole in the north in October, which is unusual.

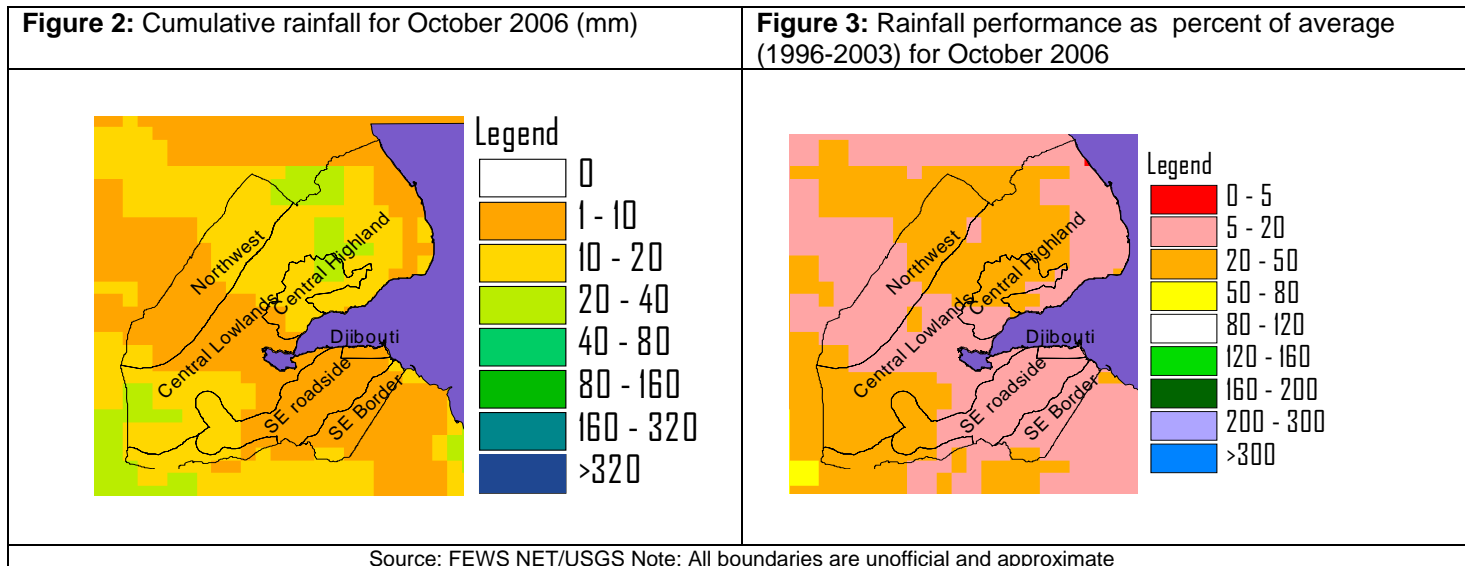
Vegetation (pasture and browse) conditions are generally satisfactory, except for certain localities in the Northwest Pastoral Livelihood Zone. The Southeast Pastoral Livelihood Zone has adequate browse to sustain livestock. But the main issue of concern is the arrival of herds to the southern coastal plains earlier than normal, potentially straining the

**Figure 1: Main *Heys/Dada* grazing areas**



fragile carrying capacity of the area. So far, the bulk of livestock in the Southeast Pastoral Livelihood Zone have remained at their inland grazing areas which have abundant browse and adequate surface water due to good *Karan/Karma* rains followed by a timely onset of the *Heys/Dada* rains.

The IGAD Climate Outlook Forum classified Djibouti as outside of the risk zone of the potential El Nino currently developing – Djibouti is therefore not expected to receive excessive rains during November-December period. However the October rains triggered moderate flash floods and caused some damage to the small gardens near the banks of Ambouli dry creek. The extent of the damage is not yet known.



### Urban food security

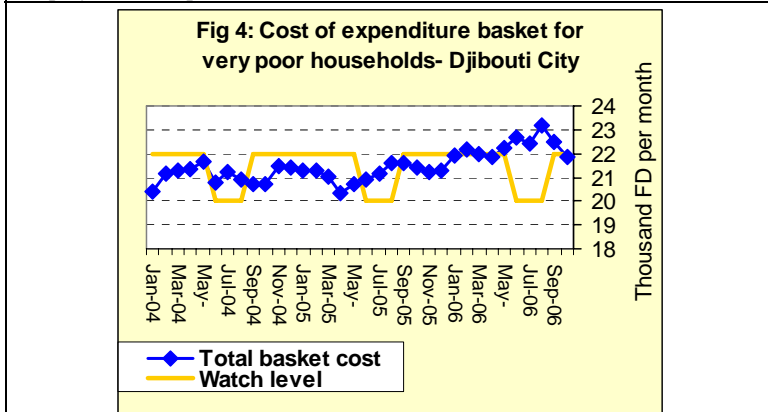
Because of declining prices in staple foods (2 percent) and essential non food items (5 percent), the downward price trend observed for the expenditure basket in September continued in October (3 percent). Prices of beans and sorghum flour fell in October by 7 percent and 10 percent respectively. Good harvests in high-production areas of Ethiopia and Somaliland, the main cereal suppliers for Djibouti markets, triggered the price reduction for sorghum flour. The implementation of Ethiopian cereal export restrictions that require all grain trade to go through licensed wholesale traders has not, it appears, completely stopped the flow of food commodities across the border via informal small-scale traders.

However, this trend is expected to curtail income access of those households engaged in small-scale cereal trade from Ethiopia. Compounding this trend are the strict measures currently banning unlicensed petty trade in Djibouti city. The livelihoods of the urban poor, many of whom are entirely dependent on trade to make a living, are in jeopardy if mechanisms are not put in place (e.g., micro credit, training) to enable them to engage in licensed activities.

Key indicators at a glance	
Expenditure Indicators	Current Situation
Cost of staple foods	Decreasing
Cost of other foods	Stable
Cost of non-food items	Decreasing
Income Indicators	Current Situation
Payment of government salaries and pensions	Regular
Cargo loaded/unloaded at Djibouti Port	Not known

*Key Indicators Explained*

In the city, most necessities are purchased, and thus the key indicators to monitor are those linked to expenditure and to income. The main sources of income for poor households are casual labor, petty trade, low-wage formal employment and pensions.



Source: DISED/FEWS NET  
 Notes: Figure 3 shows trends in the cost of staple foods, other foods and non-food items per FD per household per month

Although government monthly salary payments have been regular and stable over the past two years, the freezing of

salary increases has prevented urban salaries from keeping up with inflation, and the value of these salaries has eroded. Although port activities are booming, generating increased casual labor opportunities for the urban poor, this sector is still inadequate to absorb the high number of unskilled laborers in the urban market.

Food security for the population of Djibouti city has been bolstered by recent economic growth. This economic growth has taken place largely in the construction sector, including construction of port facilities (e.g., new petroleum and container terminals in Doraleh), hotels (e.g., tourist hotels built to accommodate guests of the recent Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, or COMESA, Summit), and facilities associated with two investment banks. In the absence of training initiatives, it is not known to what extent these activities will reduce unemployment in lower income households.

With the onset of the rains in the coastal belt as well as environmental factors (e.g., open ditch latrines and standing surface water), conditions are favorable for a spike in the incidence of malaria. The suburban population is currently using mosquito nets to prevent transmission, and the government has begun to implement control measures (e.g., a spraying scheme), albeit at a slow pace. Timely interventions are required to effectively prevent a spike in morbidity rates, including the application of insecticides to stagnant water sources and open ditch latrines at regular intervals.

### Changes in the livestock market

The high prices of small ruminants in local markets continue to favor pastoralists. Djibouti recently opened a regional center for livestock exports to the Gulf countries, to counteract the effects of Saudi Arabia's ban on livestock imports from Djibouti, in place since 2000 to prevent transmission of Rift Valley Fever. The new center will have the technical and scientific capacity to provide a certificate of health and quarantine for animals intended for export. It is expected that all countries in the region will make use of the center which has been recognized by the principal livestock importer, Saudi Arabia. The restoration of this trade may divert the majority of Djibouti's livestock sales to the export market, with a series of domestic effects. The trade offers significant

income earning potential for pastoralists, as well as increased casual labor opportunities (e.g., livestock caretakers, loading and unloading of livestock, provision of veterinary services, etc.) and petty trade (e.g., opening of small restaurants, trade in forage, etc.). However, it will also likely reduce income for urban-based butchers, and increase the price of meat for domestic consumption.

**Figure 5:** Trend in livestock (small stock) prices in Balbala market

