

SOUTH SUDAN Food Security Outlook Update

December 2011

Below-average 2011 crop performance and insecurity will affect food security

Key Messages

- Below-average 2011 harvests, insecurity and conflict in many areas, increased demand due to the growing IDP, returnee, and refugee populations, and high cereal prices are likely to result in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity for an estimated 2.5 - 3 million people during 2012.
- Key areas of concern are Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Warrap, and Northern Bahr El Gazal states, where food insecurity is likely to deteriorate during the January – March period.
- The lean season is expected to start two months earlier than normal in March, when current grain stocks and off-farm food sources will be significantly depleted, and above-average prices will begin to rise.

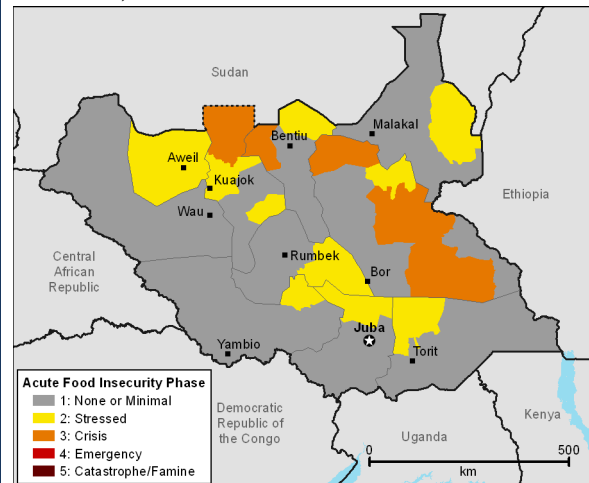
Updated food security outlook through March 2012

Generally, mixed food insecurity conditions will likely persist through March 2012, ranging from minimal food insecurity (IPC Phase 1) to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels. Minimal food insecurity is defined as a situation in which households do not experience short-term instability and are able to meet basic food needs without negative coping strategies. Stressed food insecurity is defined as a situation in which households experience short-term instability, and food consumption is reduced, but households do not engage in irreversible coping strategies. Crisis food insecurity is defined as households experiencing short-term instability that results in losses of assets and/or significant food consumption deficits.

Key areas of concern are **Jonglei State** counties of KhorFulus, Fangak Wuror, Akobo, Ayod, and Pibor; **Unity State** counties of Mayom, Abiemnom, and Pariang; **Upper Nile State** counties of Maban and potentially Renk, Manyo, Fashoda and Panyikang; **Warrap State** counties of Twic, Gogrial East, and Gogrial West; and **Northern Bahr El Gazal State** counties of Aweil East, Aweil West, Aweil North, Aweil South, and Aweil Center.

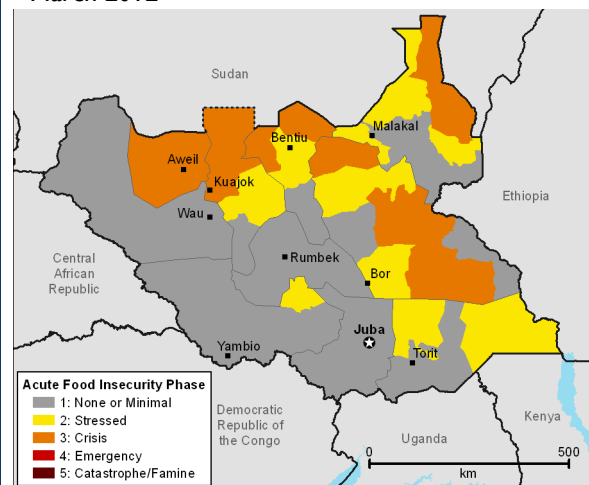
Food insecurity in these areas remains driven by below-average harvests, insecurity and population displacements, and increased market-dependent populations comprising returnees and refugees from Sudan. Market access remains restricted due to ongoing trade restrictions by Sudan, which have increased upward pressure on food prices in areas that typically

Figure 1. Current estimated food security outcomes, December 2011



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 2. Estimated food security outcomes, January - March 2012



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on the IPC Household-based Acute Food Insecurity Reference Table, see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

This report provides an update to the October 2011 FEWS NET Food Security Outlook report, which estimated food security conditions in South Sudan from October 2011 through March 2012.

depend on food imports from Sudan. The impact of these restrictions will become more severe after March 2012, when grain stocks and off-farm food sources will be significantly depleted. However, informal reports from the field suggest slight improvements in informal trade flows, especially in Western and Northern Bahr El Gazal States.

The Government of South Sudan had indicated in September that it would deny access for Sudanese herders to traditional grazing areas in South Sudan, should the general trade restrictions by Sudan continue. However, talks in November sponsored by the NGO Concordis International between representatives of Sudanese Misseriya herders and host populations during a cross-border coexistence meeting held in Unity State may allow these traditional migrations to take place. The meetings focused on how migration of the herders across the international border into Unity and Warrap will occur this year and stressed that the herders were welcome as long as they respected law and order. Tensions have occurred in the past as Misseriya herders have carried arms into South Sudan.

Nile-Sobat Zone counties of Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, KhorFulus and Fangak

Crisis conditions are likely to persist through at least March 2012 in parts of Unity State, including Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, Fangak, and Khorfulus counties, driven mainly by insecurity and the significant number of refugees from South Kordofan State (Sudan), close to 87,000 returnees from Sudan, and displaced populations from Abyei. Mayom County remains the most affected by insecurity, which resulted in the displacement of 5-10 percent of the population into Rubkona and Abiemnom, while an additional 20-25 percent of the population failed to cultivate. In Pariang County, there are more than 20,000 refugees from South Kordofan, currently located in Yida refugee camp. Abiemnom is overwhelmed by displaced populations from Abyei and other areas. Insecurity also caused reduced cultivation in Fangak and Khorfulus, worsened by severe flooding which has now caused premature food shortages for close to 40,000 people.

Eastern Flood Plains Zone counties of Wuror, Akobo, Bor, Ayod, Pibor and parts of Upper Nile (Maban)

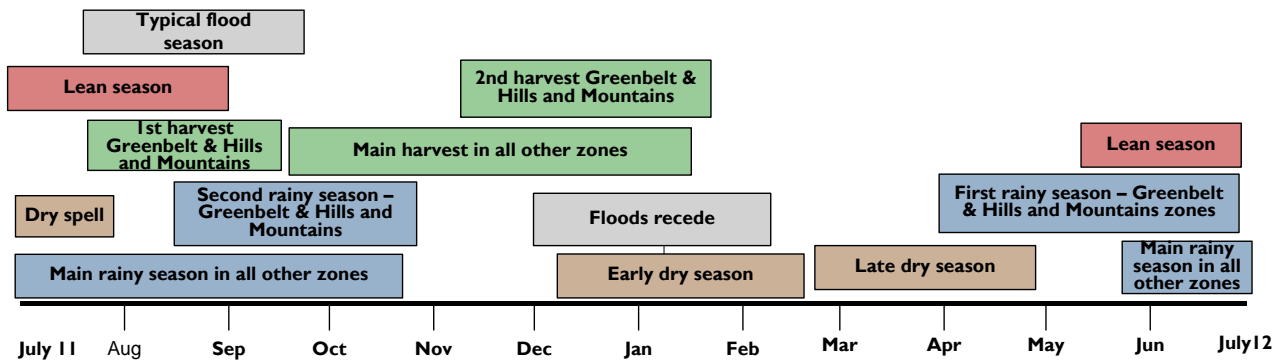
Crisis levels persist in Wuror, Akobo and Pibor counties due to the impact of violent and destructive cattle raiding since April. An estimated 15 percent of the total Wuror County population did not cultivate due to displacement, while persistent conflicts between Murle of Pibor County and other tribes continue to disrupt normal food access activities in Wuror and Akobo counties. The continued presence of armed militia in the zone has now extended to Bor; attacks in early December killed over 40 people and displaced over 3,500 people, and involved the looting of an unconfirmed number of cattle.

Food security conditions in Upper Nile's Maban County are deteriorating due to the continued arrival of refugees from Blue Nile State in Sudan. According to UNHCR, there are more than 30,000 refugees in Maban County, whose population is around 45,000. In addition, 11,000 people have returned to Maban County from Sudan since last year. The refugee and returnee populations, which together are nearly the size of the host population, now overwhelm access to local resources. In addition, Renk, Manyo, Fashoda, Panyikang and Ayod counties could increasingly become hotspots following a recent appeal by armed militia leaders to host populations in Upper Nile and Jonglei to evacuate military strategic areas. Areas along the Sudan – South Sudan border face increased insecurity due to high levels of tension and conflict, and intensified fighting between South Sudan and Sudan security forces since the beginning of December in some areas.

Western Flood Plains Zone (Aweil East, West, North, South, Center, Twic, Gogrial East, Gogrial West)

Following the conclusion of the short-term sorghum harvest in October, poor households in Northern Bahr El Gazal and northern parts of Warrap State have transitioned from Crisis to Stressed levels. However, due to expected below-average harvests, as well as high IDP and returnee concentrations, these improvements are not likely to be sustained beyond November/December 2011. Crisis conditions are likely to recur by January, when harvest stocks will begin to be exhausted. Asset-poor households, returnees from Sudan, and the displaced population from Abyei will continue to experience significant food consumption gaps. The gaps are likely to remain most critical in Twic County, where the displaced from Abyei number over 42,000, equivalent to 20 percent of the total Twic population. These populations are relying on humanitarian assistance and the host population to meet basic food needs.

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET