



GIEWS Country Brief Cameroon

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

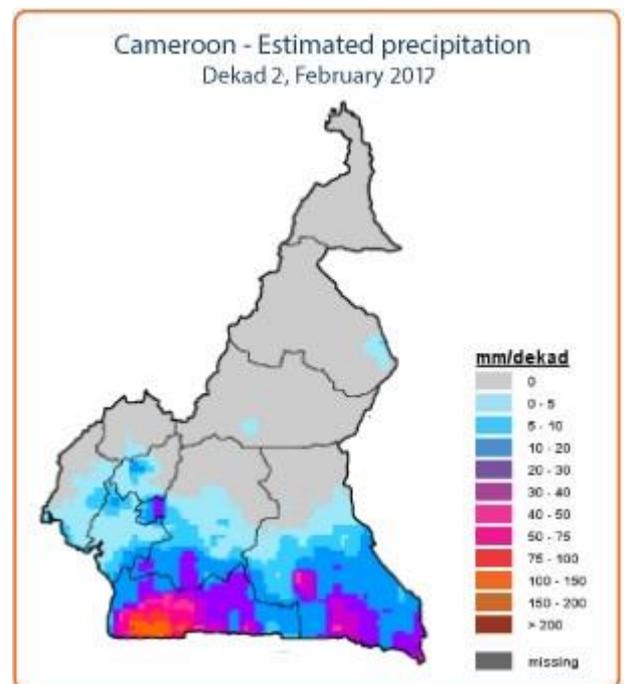
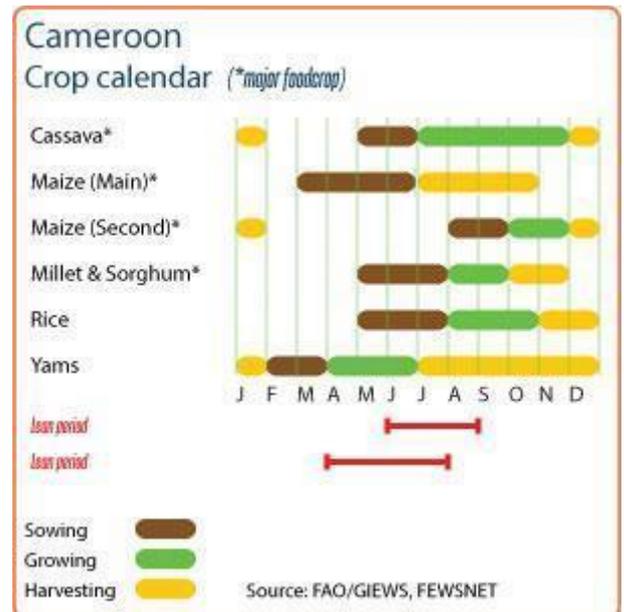
- **Concerns over performance of upcoming 2017 cropping season in the Far North Region**
- **Reduced 2016 crop production due to erratic rainfall and civil insecurity in northern areas**
- **Low inflation rates in recent years**
- **Alarming food insecurity situation in northern and eastern regions due to refugee influx and internal displacements**

Concerns over the upcoming 2017 cropping season in Far North Region, strong livelihood support required

In bi-modal rainfall areas of the Centre and the South, planting of the 2017 maize crop started recently. According to remote sensing analysis, the onset of the rainy season was timely, with southern areas beginning to receive rains in the second dekad of February (see estimated precipitation map).

In the uni-modal rainfall areas of the North, planting of sorghum and millet is expected to begin in May. Agricultural operations continue to be severely affected by civil unrest which spread from neighbouring Nigeria in late 2014. The widespread insecurity resulted in displacement of people, caused input shortages and depleted households' productive assets that were already inadequate, due to recurrent climatic shocks which have eroded the resilience capacity of a large number of households. As a result, a reduced agricultural output for the third consecutive year is likely and a timely and effective support to the agricultural sector is required to mitigate the extent of the impact of the protracted and widespread insecurity on the agricultural sector.

To help avert a full-scale food security and nutrition crisis, in the framework of the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan, FAO is appealing for USD 4.6 million to respond to the needs of 100 000 crisis-hit farmers, by supporting crop and vegetable production through the distribution of cowpea, maize, sorghum and vegetable seeds, fertilizers and bio-pesticides and supporting livestock production through livestock infrastructure and water points rehabilitation, small ruminants and poultry restocking and animal vaccination.



Reduced 2016 crop production due to erratic rainfall and civil insecurity in northern areas

In bi-modal rainfall areas of the Centre and the South, harvesting of the 2016 second season maize crops was completed last January, while the main season harvest was concluded in October 2016. According to satellite-based analysis, abundant rains from March to May were followed in parts by erratic and below-average rainfall from June to September, with a negative impact on long-cycle main season crops and early-planted second season crops. Subsequently, adequate precipitation in October was followed by an early cessation of rains in mid-November. As a result, the 2016 maize production was reportedly below the last five-year average level.

Low inflation rates in recent years

According to the International Monetary Fund, the average inflation rate, which was estimated at a low of 2 percent in 2015 and 2016, is forecast to remain stable in 2017. In the last several years, rates of inflation were highly volatile, varying from a low of 1 percent in 2007 to 5 percent in 2008 and then declining to 3 percent in 2009 and to 1 percent in 2010. Rates rose again in 2011 to 3 percent, before progressively declining to 1.9 percent in 2014.

Alarming food insecurity situation in northern and eastern regions due to refugee influx and internal displacements

The overall food security situation has sharply deteriorated in 2015 and 2016 due to multiple shocks, including the influx of refugees from the Central African Republic and Nigeria, increasing civil insecurity and natural hazards. The number of food insecure people is currently estimated at 2.6 million, more than twice the level in 2014. The area most affected by food insecurity is the Far North Region, where 59 percent of the food insecure caseload is located. In this region, substantial and increasing number of households are resorting to negative coping strategies. According to a survey carried out in December 2016, 22 percent of the interviewed households had reduced the number of meals, 51 percent had switched to less nutritious types of food, 10 percent had sold productive assets including female livestock and 8 percent had cut essential non-food expenses including health, sanitation and education.

As of late January 2016, the number of refugees from the Central African Republic, who sought refuge mainly in East and Adamaoua regions after a surge in violence in December 2013, were estimated at about 143 000 people. Taking into account the refugees who had entered the country since 2004, the total number of refugees from the Central African Republic residing in Cameroon is currently put at about 276 000 people.

Refugees from Nigeria, who entered the country following the deterioration of the security situation in Borno State in June 2013, were estimated at about 85 000 in early March 2017 and are located in the Far North Region. In addition, civil unrest spread from Nigeria into the region and displaced about 192 000 Cameroonians.

