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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Above-average production forecast for 2011/12 “short-rains” maize crop
- Improved food security situation observed in drought-hit northern agro-pastoralist areas and in marginal cropping lowlands
- Price of maize show an unusual increase in main markets following heavy rains

### Favourable outturn of the 2011/12 “short-rains” maize crop

Harvesting of the 2011/12 “short-rains” crops is expected to start at the beginning of March and maize production is forecast at an above average 580 000 tonnes. The “short-rains” season started in mid-October, about three weeks earlier than normal. Abundant and evenly distributed rains were received in most areas, improving soil moisture and benefitting crops and pasture. However, at the end of November, excessive rains have resulted in localised flash floods in northern districts of Garissa, Wajir, western Kenya, Nairobi and Isiolo, and in some areas of southern coastal districts. About 100 000 people have been displaced and damages to infrastructure and losses to crops and livestock were reported. The heavy rains also coincided with the final stage of the “long-rains” crops harvesting in parts of Rift Valley, reducing grains quality.

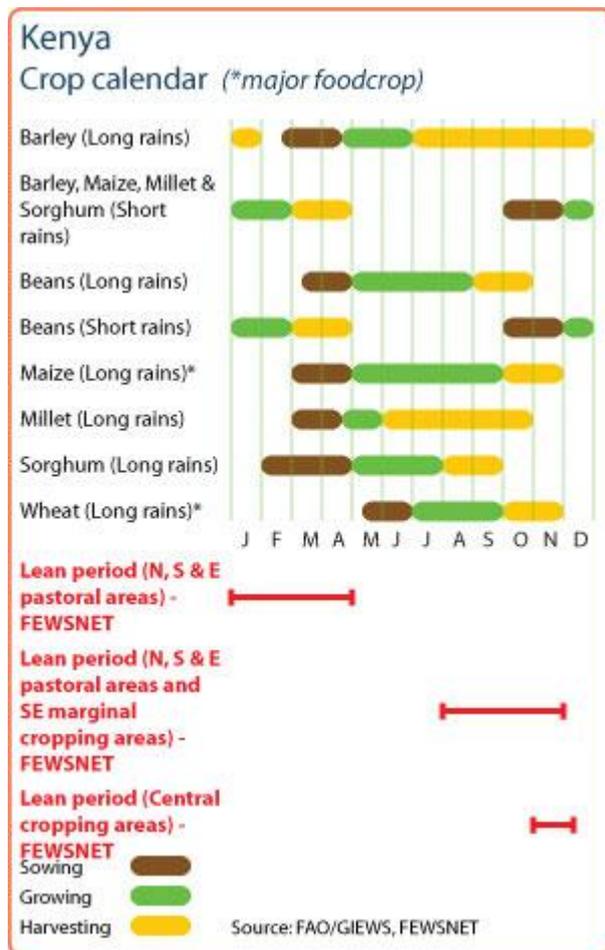
Aggregate cereal production for 2011/12 is provisionally put at 3.4 million tonnes, slightly above the last five years average. Cereal import requirements for 2011/12 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at 2 million tonnes (about 22 percent up on last year), including 830 000 tonnes of wheat, 760 000 tonnes of maize and 400 000 tonnes of rice.

### Unseasonable increase in maize prices due to heavy rains

Following the record levels in most markets in July 2011, price of the main staple maize has sharply declined until last October. The supply of the newly harvested crops, cross-border inflows and sales of relief food in pastoral areas have all contributed to the decline. However, prices increased unseasonably in the last months of 2011 due to heavy rains and localized floods, which delayed harvests in the main producing areas of the Rift valley and disrupted marketing operations of the already harvested crops. Increases of 24 percent in Nairobi and 29 percent in Mombasa were recorded between October to December. Currently, maize prices are well above their levels of the previous year in all monitored markets. In December 2011, at about USD 400 dollars per tonne, maize prices in Nairobi and Mombasa were almost twice their levels of the previous year.

### Improved food security situation in pastoral areas and southern cropping areas

Food security situation in drought-affected areas has improved since the beginning of the 2011 short-rains season in October. The positive early onset of rains immediately brought some relief to northern and



### Kenya Cereal production

	2006-2010 average	2010	2011 estimate	change 2011/2010
	000 tonnes		percent	
Maize	2 777	2 900	2 850	-2
Wheat	283	252	230	-9
Sorghum	130	220	210	-5
Others	169	148	143	-3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 359</b>	<b>3 520</b>	<b>3 433</b>	<b>-2</b>

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.  
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

north-eastern pastoral areas, improving water and pasture conditions and reducing trekking distances. In south-eastern and coastal cropping areas, household food security has also improved since November with harvesting of short-cycle crops, including vegetables and legumes. Further improvements are expected during the first quarter of 2012 with harvesting of "short-rains" crops that represent about 70 percent of annual production in these areas.

The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance is currently estimated at 3.75 million, more than double the levels in January 2011. Most of the highly food insecure households are in agro-pastoralist areas in northern and north-eastern districts that experienced the negative effects of two to three consecutive dry weather seasons. In these areas, livestock losses due to the prolonged drought (and the recent floods in some areas) are estimated at about 8 million animals.

The drought-induced flux of Somali refugees into Kenya has significantly declined in the last few months. According to UNHCR data, the total number of hosted refugees in several camps in Garissa district has reached the unprecedented figure of 520 000 people, with limited access to basic needs such as food, shelter, water and sanitation, and increasing risks for proliferation of diseases.

