



GIEWS Country Brief South Sudan

Reference Date: 21-February-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Famine declared in parts of former Unity State
- About 5 million people estimated to be severely food insecure until July 2017
- Crop production declines due to insecurity and displacement of farmers
- Food prices at exceptionally high levels

Famine declared in parts of former Unity State

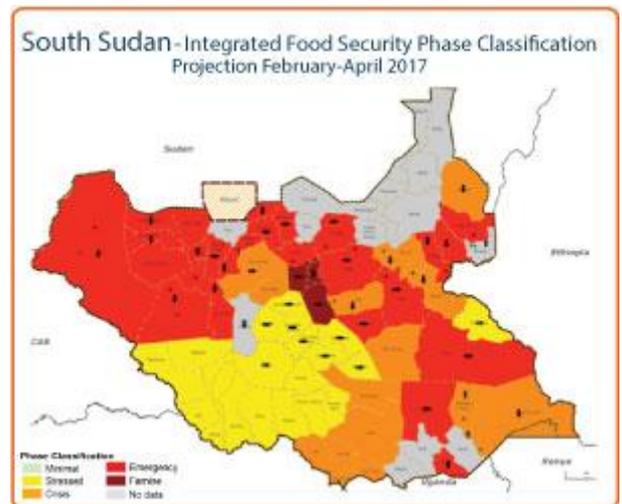
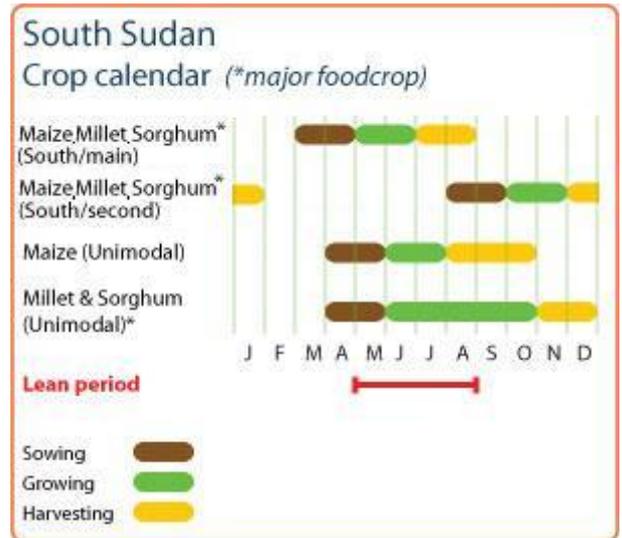
According to the latest IPC analysis, localized famine conditions are currently reported in former Unity State, with a caseload of about 100 000 people in IPC category 5 (“Catastrophe”) in former Leer and Mayendit counties. In addition, always in former Unity State, there is an elevated risk that famine is occurring also in former Koch County, but it cannot be confirmed due to limited available evidence, while in former Panyijiar County famine has been avoided so far only thanks to adequate humanitarian assistance.

Nationwide, food insecurity has escalated during the last three years due to conflict, violence, macro-economic collapse and exhaustion of households’ coping mechanisms. Between February and April 2017, about 4.9 million people, over 40 percent of total population, are estimated to be severely food insecure and this figure is projected to reach 5.5 million people at the peak of the lean season in July. Although most food insecure people are concentrated in the Greater Upper Nile region, food security has drastically deteriorated in former Northern Bahr el Ghazal State and the Greater Equatoria Region.

Since the start of the conflict in mid-December 2013, according to OCHA and UNHCR, over 3 million people were forced to flee their homes due to insecurity, including about 1.85 million IDPs, with about 195 000 people in UNMISS Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites across the country, and 1.2 million people that fled into neighbouring countries (Uganda, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Kenya).

Below-average crop production estimated in 2016 due to insecurity and displacements

Harvesting of the 2016 main season crops was completed in January. According to the preliminary results of the FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM), the overall production (including first season crops harvested last July/August) for 2016 is estimated at below-average level of



South Sudan Cereal production

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 estimate	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Sorghum	718	772	712	-8
Maize	112	140	107	-24
Millet	5	8	6	-25
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	836	920	825	-10

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

826 000 tonnes, about 10 percent below the previous year's output. Despite favourable rains across the country (except in Greater Kapoeta region in the east), crop production has been severely affected by increasing displacements and insecurity (following the renewed conflict in July) that hampered cultivation activities, including harvesting. In particular, area planted with second season crops in the "green belt" has been well-below average, with most households being able to cultivate only small plots near homesteads, mainly with vegetables.

Land preparation for planting first season crops is about to start in southern bi-modal rainfall areas. According to the latest weather forecast by the Greater Horn of Africa Consensus Forum (GHACOF), the March-to-May rainy season is expected to be drier than usual in south-eastern areas of the country, including former Eastern Equatoria State and the southern part of former Jonglei State, while above-average rainfall amounts are expected in the "green belt", including former Central and Western Equatoria states.

Prices of cereals at exceptionally high levels

In the capital, Juba, prices of sorghum and maize peaked in December 2016 and subsequently declined in January 2017 by 6 and 10 percent, respectively, partly as a result of the harvesting of the 2016 second season crops in southern bi-modal rainfall areas. In February, prices resumed their increasing trend, surging by about 30 percent and reaching new record highs. Prices of cassava and groundnuts followed similar patterns, increasing by 15 and 30 percent in February, while prices of wheat, after having peaked in August 2016, declined by 30 percent between August 2016 and February 2017. Overall, in February, staple food prices in Juba were between 2 and more than 4 times their levels in February last year, due to insecurity, a tight supply situation, hyperinflation and a significant depreciation of the local currency.

In markets located in central and northern uni-modal rainfall areas, prices of sorghum, after having peaked in July/August, declined on average by about 40 percent between July/August and November 2016 as newly harvested crops increased supplies. Subsequently, prices resumed their upward trend, increasing by about 20 percent between November 2016 and January 2017, when they were between 3 and 10 times higher than 12 months earlier.

