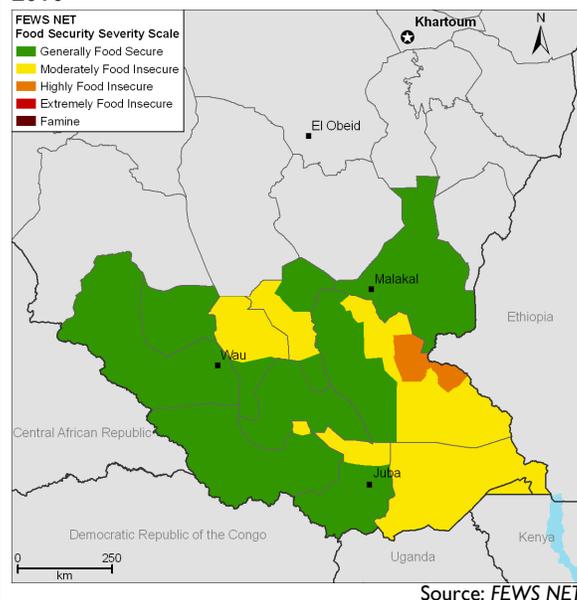


## SOUTH SUDAN Food Security Update

January 2010

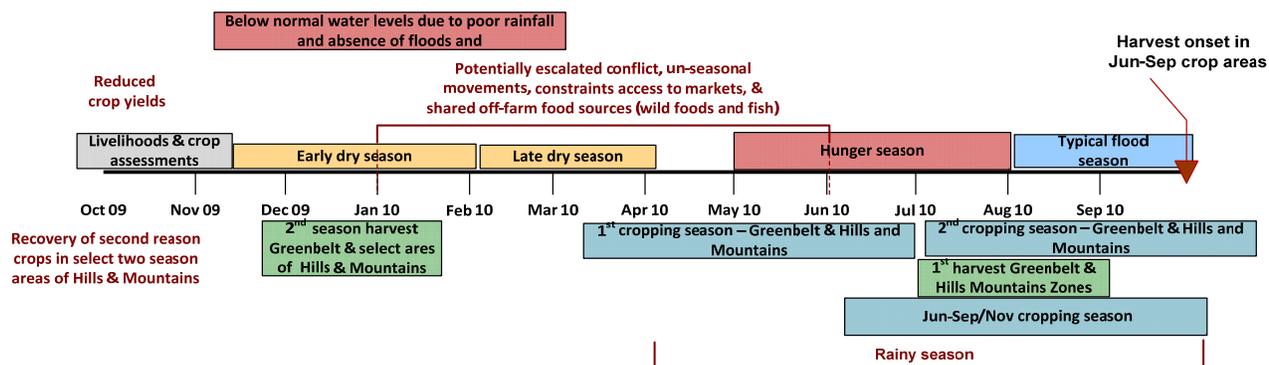
- Food insecurity has improved in the western sector of Southern Sudan, particularly in Northern Bahr El Gazal, Western Bahr El Gazal, Unity, Upper Nile, and Warrap, as households rely on short-cycle harvests during October-November, and the long-cycle sorghum harvest, which is just concluding.
- Current food security improvements will only be sustained until the end of January, when poor households, especially those in drought-affected short-cycle sorghum-growing areas located in the Eastern Flood Plains (eastern parts of Jonglei and Upper Nile states) and Western Flood Plains (Northern Bahr El Gazal, Lakes, and northern parts of Warrap) will exhaust their harvests. This is due to poor rains and below-normal water levels, which also means that off-farm food sources (such as fish and wild foods) are less available this year. These foods typically fill a significant portion of crop shortfalls.
- Unusually high levels of conflict and cattle raiding during 2009, which displaced 350-400,000 people by December, have extended into January with conflicts occurring in Jonglei, the Warrap-Unity States border, and Lakes. In Jonglei, a peace initiative planned for December among two key conflicting groups of Murle pastoralists and Nuer was postponed. Many past peace initiatives between Murle and Nuer have been unsuccessful due to failure to respect conditions set by the peace agreements. These events increase pessimism over the possibility of ending the conflicts soon given current below-normal water levels, below-normal pasture conditions, and reduced access to fish. These conditions increase the potential for exacerbated conflicts during this year's dry season (January – April).
- Increased conflict prompted the Government of Southern Sudan to embark on disarmament of civilians beginning in December 2009. Past disarmament initiatives have not been very successful due to partial coverage. Latest updates indicate that close to 3,000 people have been displaced from Akot Town in Lakes State after fighting with security forces over death of a civilian during disarmament.

**Figure 1. Current food security conditions, January, 2010**



For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale)

### Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

## Food security overview

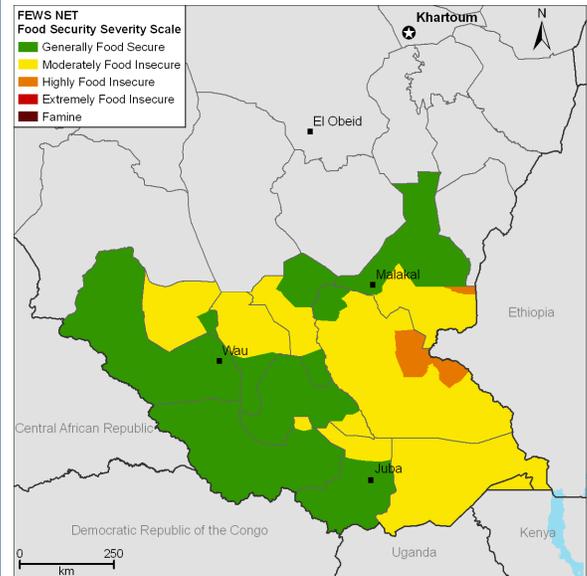
Despite reduced crop yields, food security conditions significantly improved during November-December (Figure 1) as projected in the October Outlook. Households have focused on consumption of harvested crops, mainly sorghum and groundnuts. During December-January, improvements also occurred in areas where long-cycle sorghum has just been harvested, namely, Western Bahr El Gazal's Wau County, southern parts of Warrap State (Tonj), Lakes State, and parts of Upper Nile. There are also reports of improved food access among displaced households in the Greenbelt Western Equatoria State. Contrary to earlier reports, there are indications that some of the displaced households cultivated during the second season and are now relying on the second season harvest. However, food insecurity persists in the eastern sector zones of Hills and Mountains, Pastoral, and Eastern Flood Plains (Eastern Equatoria and Jonglei states). Displaced households, especially those scattered in areas of Mvolo and Wullu, also remain food insecure. The November-December food security improvements have not been sufficient to mitigate food insecurity in the southeastern part of the Eastern Flood Plains (Jonglei State- Akobo, Nyirol) and the Pastoral zones due to combined negative effects of prolonged conflict, poor crop performance, below normal water levels and deteriorating pasture conditions. The same can be said of single-season growing located in Budi and Torit where near crop failure conditions occurred last year. In Magwi County, an improved second season has improved food security conditions, but some 5,000 households in some pockets are still at risk and are currently relying on food provided by CRS (Catholic Relief Services).

Food security conditions will begin to deteriorate starting in February when crop stocks from last year's poor harvests become exhausted, which is two–four months earlier than normal (Figure 2a). These will include northern parts of the Western Flood Plains (highland areas in Northern Bahr El Gazal and north parts of Warrap), Eastern Flood Plains (south eastern parts of Upper Nile), and Nile – Sobat (pockets in Unity and the entire eastern part of Jonglei). Further deterioration is expected during April-June as the hunger season will be more severe, as it is expected to start earlier by two months (Figure 2b). There are concerns that national elections scheduled for April could worsen some of the already ongoing conflicts and their negative impacts.

Note: Food aid (and associated constraints in the delivery of aid) is one of several variables that FEWS NET incorporates into its analysis and mapping of food security conditions. Accordingly, the maps above (Figures 1, 2a, and 2b) account for food aid that is expected to occur during the time frames indicated, based on indications that the food pipeline will be healthy until June 2010. For more information on the FEWS NET Food Insecurity Severity Scale, see [www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale](http://www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale).

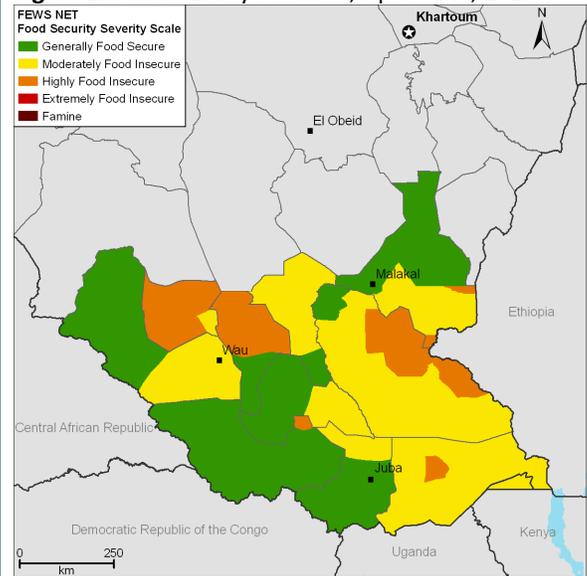
Table 1 below revisits some of the assumptions for the October 2009-March 2010 outlook presented in the October Outlook, to review how they have progressed to date and to provide updates on how they may have changed.

**Figure 2a. Most Likely Scenario, January-March, 2010**



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 2b. Most Likely Scenario, April-June, 2010**



Source: FEWS NET

**Table I.** Review of October-December outlook assumptions

October – December assumptions	Progress of these assumptions to date
Conflict will persist in the eastern half of Southern Sudan, especially between Murle Pastoralists (Pibor) and Nuer of Akobo, Wuror, Diror and Waat Counties).	Insecurity, especially involving cattle raiding, has continued into 2010. The raiding has extended to other neighboring areas, namely Bor County, and also escalated along the border of Unity-Warrap states
Anticipated crop harvests might not necessarily mitigate food insecurity in the conflict areas in the Eastern Flood Plains.	The harvests were in reduced quantities and have not fully mitigated food insecurity given the high food shortages in the Eastern Flood Plains and the northern parts of the Pastoral Zone.
Crop harvests in the June-September crop growing areas might last for 3-4 months instead of the typical 6 months.	This is consistent with informal reports suggesting that harvests for poor households will start running out in February instead of the typical month of April.
A poor second season in select Hills and Mountain areas and potentially limited food imports from Uganda due to reportedly reduced production in parts of Uganda this year.	An improved second season harvest confirmed in Kajokeji and Magwi. Overall, the second season has been better than projected.  Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)/FEWS NET market study mission in Eastern Equatoria during November-December observed large amounts of food imports of maize, maize flour, sorghum and beans from Uganda, an indication that the markets would be well supplied during 2010 dry season as long as insecurity does not disrupt movement and food export policy conditions in Uganda do not change.

**Seasonal Progress**

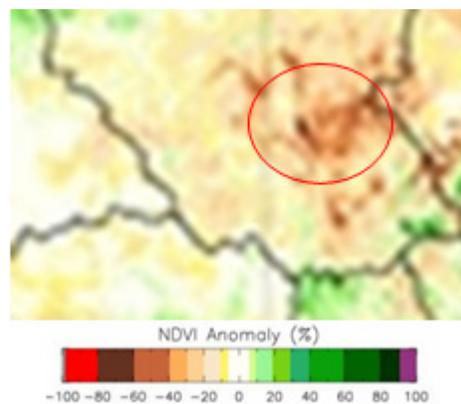
The January – April dry season has begun but was marked by earlier than normal livestock movements, especially in areas affected by conflict and poor rainfall like Eastern Flood Plains - Jonglei State. This is consistent with Figure 3, which shows below-average vegetation conditions, especially in Jonglei State as of 31 December, 2009. Last year’s livestock cattle raiding levels have been maintained. Though these have not been linked to fights over pasture and water, shortage of these resources potentially exacerbates the conflicts. Below are detailed food security conditions for each livelihood zone.

**Eastern Flood Plains Livelihood Zone**

Poor crop performance affected yields in areas of Maiwut, Maban, Longuchok, Ulang, Nasir, and Luakpiny counties last year, due to dry spells in June – July, which delayed planting by one month. A significant proportion of households are expected to exhaust their crop stocks by the end of this month. The status of access to wild game, a significant contributor to the food basket and a crucial crop gap filling food sources, is unclear given a government ban on hunting in recent years.

Conditions are worse further south in Akobo, Wuror and Nyirol counties, where food shortages have persisted and been exacerbated by last year’s escalated conflict. The conflict had displaced an estimated 33,000 and 104,000 people in Akobo and Jonglei State, respectively, by November. The conflict is complex as it is a combination of persistent inter-tribe and inter-tribal fighting, combined with cattle raiding. Here, close to half of the population will be food insecure, with up to 30 percent highly food insecure until the next harvest in September. These conditions could rapidly deteriorate if the current conflict

**Figure 3.** Vegetation conditions 21-31 December, 2009



Source: NASA

**Figure 4.** South Sudan livelihood zones



Source : FEWS NET

conditions are an indication. Already, both inter-clan (among Lou Nuer), between Lou Nuer and Lou Jikany and intertribal (Lou Nuer and Murle) have already occurred during the first week of January. As of November – December, last year's conflict had started negatively impacting food security of households in Akobo, Wuror and Nyirol in the following ways: inter-clan cattle raiding between Lou Nuer and the neighboring Gawaar Nuer of Ayod as well as with the Dinka of Bor had denied the Lou Nuer access to grazing resources in the Gawaar and Dinka habited areas; conflict and cattle raiding with Murle pastoralists had curtailed livestock grazing movement along Pibor River which is more accessible to the raiders. January updates from SC-UK suggest that the Lou Nuer are now accessing the above grazing areas but tensions remain very high and conflict in the grazing areas could erupt any time.

Currently, food insecure households are relying on wild foods, food aid and livestock products for those who have some cattle. Some peace initiatives are in progress in this zone but are yet to bear fruit. The government has been disarming people since December, and a peace conference between Murle and Lou Nuer that had been scheduled for December was postponed. Disarmament and peace conference initiatives have been conducted in the past but were unsuccessful. Disarmament was partial, covering some areas, while numerous peace conferences between the Murle and Lou Nuer often end up with agreements that are never respected.

### **Western Flood Plains**

Similar to the Eastern Flood Plains, the northern parts of this zone were affected by problematic rains, but only in the highlands, which are farmed by up to 70 percent of the population. Slightly delayed rains that started at the end of June were soon followed by dryness throughout July, which negatively affected growth of the main crops, short-cycle sorghum and groundnuts. However, crops performance in the lowlands was good, sufficient to last lowland farmers until the next harvest, but for poor households, yields in the highlands will last until January-February at most. This year's food shortages are a combination of erratic rainfall that reduced yields in highlands; low water levels significantly reducing availability and access to fish, and chronic food insecurity. The latest threat is cattle raiding along the Dinka-Nuer border (Dinka occupied Gogrial and Twic counties with Mayom County Nuer).

The long-cycle sorghum harvest is being concluded in the southern parts of Lakes (Rumbek, Yirol and Cuibet) and Warrap (Tonj) States. The sorghum was affected by below-normal rainfall through June-July, necessitating replanting in August when rains improved. It was at flowering stage in November and there have been no further updates since. Of concern remains ongoing inter-clan and inter-tribal insecurity in Tonj and Wullu respectively, where people have been displaced since June last year and failed to cultivate. Also, cattle raiding along Warrap and Lakes states borders with the Nile-Sobat's Unity State appear to be increasing. The latest updates on Warrap indicate that 30,000 cattle have been stolen in the first week of January. These raids mark a return to events similar to the pre-peace period, characterized by cattle looting and displacements that necessitated signing of the historic Wunliet Peace conference in 1998, which resulted in some improvements. This requires very close monitoring and response preparedness.

### **Ironstone Plateau**

As in the southern parts of the Western Flood Plains, this is predominantly a long-cycle sorghum growing zone, with cassava in Raga and Wau counties. The May-July dry spell negatively affected growth of long-term sorghum, which started recovering in August when normal rains resumed. Extended or additional planting was also done. Despite resumption of normal rains, groundnuts did not recover significantly, causing farmers to increase simsim planting, particularly in Raga County. As of early November in Wau County, only 60 percent of sorghum planted had reached a stage where it would yield successfully. The remaining 40 percent was at risk of poor performance or failing if there were no rains during the remaining part of November. The harvest is nearly concluded. There are no updates on whether the 40 percent of the crop succeeded. Generally, food security conditions in Raga and Wau County are likely to be stable in the coming year, mainly due to reliance on root crops and wild foods such as cassava, wild yams, shea butter, dome palm and honey which are critical in supplementing grain shortages. Any shortages that are likely to occur would be due to the 40 percent crop loss, especially in Wau County. The shortages would be most evident around May – June.

Meanwhile, food security conditions in Jur, Aroyo, and Aweil Center counties are stable following a near-normal sorghum harvest, while those in Terekeka were reported poor with an expected 60 percent yield reduction. As mentioned in the previous month, concern remains over Mvolo and Wullu counties, where people remain displaced, largely due to inter-tribal/livelihood conflicts. They also failed to cultivate last year. Of additional concern are suspected Lords Resistance Army (LRA) attacks on Raga since October last year. The latest attack was on Boro Medina on 15 December 2009. The LRA has

already destabilized a significant Greenbelt Zone population. The population in Raga County is typically food secure, and increased LRA attacks make them increasingly vulnerable to food insecurity, as the LRA tends to kill and displace people, loot food and burn assets.

### **Greenbelt Livelihood Zone**

The second cropping season which started in August with maize, groundnuts, millet, and sorghum is now concluding with harvesting which started in December. As of November, crop performance was normal. Recent informal reports suggest that some households displaced by LRA were able to cultivate during the second season and have harvested together with the rest of the population, though not necessarily the same quantities. It is likely that the harvest will make a significant improvement to the food basket considering that the land is much more productive than all other zones. However, it is unlikely to last until July when first season crops mature for consumption. Meanwhile, LRA attacks continued into November, but significantly reduced in December. The latest threat is from Ambororo nomads, who originated from northern parts of Sudan. Reports suggest that they want to settle in the zone but the local population is against this. This is a potential source of conflict.

### **Nile-Sobat River Zone**

Despite mixed crop conditions in this zone, off farm water based food sources of fish and water plants are expected to cover for crop shortfalls for the majority of households. This is largely because these foods are abundant along the Nile – Sobat Zone. However, food insecurity is expected in the southern areas affected by conflict in Jonglei State, namely, northern parts of Bor due to ongoing conflict between Lou Nuer and Dinka, and in Awerial due to conflict with Mundari of neighboring Terekeka County. The Shilluk area located further north (Malakal) with its surroundings is also at risk due to conflict between the Shilluk and Dinka tribes over land and boundaries that have now displaced 1,000 people and affected another 5000 people hosting them in Atar and Canal areas. Food security conditions in Unity State areas of Guit, Rubkona, Leer, Koch, Mayendit, Payinjiar are expected to be stable until May – June when the hunger season begins. However, concerns are increasing over resumption of cattle raiding along the Nuer-Dinka border (Unity, Lakes and Warrap States), and in addition, emerging conflict between Misseriya nomads of South Kordofan and population of Mayom and Abiemnom counties as well as in other parts along the north-south Sudan border. Latest updates from Abiemnom indicate clashes between security forces and the Misseriya because the nomads are still carrying arms. The conflict is over violation of an agreement made on 21 December stating that the nomads would not carry arms while accessing grazing in the host territory.

### **Hills & Mountains**

Single season cropping areas remain of most concern in this zone. They are the most affected by the cumulative negative impact of two consecutive failed seasons (2008 and 2009), namely large parts of Torit and Budi. The single season areas are estimated to have received only 30 percent of a typical year's harvest last year. Generally, this is expected to negatively affect 30-50 percent of the population during 2010. These comprise those from poor producing areas with little or no livestock especially in Loronyo, Kiyala, Nyong, Loudo, parts of Ikotos and Lafon, as well as some northern parts of Budi County and Lotukei.

In Magwi, an improved second season has improved food security conditions, but some 5,000 households in some pockets are still at risk and are currently relying on food provided by CRS (Catholic Relief Services). Also, Magwi County has many people that recently returned from Uganda. Though they are vulnerable, they also have kinship relations with those in Uganda, and are currently utilizing these kinship relations to mitigate some of the existing food shortages. The most recent bad year reported is 2004 when the area was devastated by the LRA, forcing people to flee to Uganda and unaffected areas. Chances are that a similar strategy will be utilized during times of food stress. Overall, households in areas where cassava production has been sustained during the years of conflict (Acholi corridor) and where wild foods are more available are anticipated to cope better than areas where cassava production was abandoned as people fled LRA insecurity (Madi corridor). Of concern is poor purchasing power of households as they are relying on charcoal and wood sales to purchase food which has seriously destroyed the environment.

### **Pastoral Zone**

Sorghum planted in April-May this year in Kapoeta failed due to lack of rain between April and August. Most serious is that lack of rain constrained the return of livestock to homesteads because pasture and water were insufficient. Livestock dominate this livelihood zone and are reported to have stayed away from grazing areas near homesteads and instead

migrated to non-traditional grazing areas due to lack of pasture and water. Typically, livestock are near homes between May and September. As of August-September, most of the livestock was grazing along the Ethiopia border and Budi County. Monitoring of livestock movements and access to grazing and water are critical in this zone, as crop failure has a much less negative impact on food security compared to livestock. Observations by a Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry – MAF/FEWS NET team conducting a market study in Kapoeta at the end of November found that pastoralists have increasingly relied on Kapoeta market to sell their livestock and purchase maize/sorghum grain sourced from Kenya and Uganda (through Torit market) since peace was signed in 2005. Livestock is sold to Juba and Torit. Livestock sales have significantly increased this year as households try to secure grain following failure of sorghum crop last year (see section on Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) / FEWS NET Market Study – November-December 2009). Despite local poor grazing and water conditions for animals, a visit to the auction observed that animals were still in good body conditions as of November.

## Markets and Trade

As of November 2009, prices of the main sorghum staple in key markets of Malakal, Juba, Wau and Aweil were respectively, 20, 18, 80 and 29 percent higher than those of November 2008. A similar trend was observed in Bor and Torit Market as well. These high prices, around the time when the main harvest had just come in, signal that high prices can be expected during 2010 given the below average crop production and ongoing conflicts. Clashes continue around Malakal and adjacent areas. Conflict between Mundari of Terekeka and Dinka of Aweril is reported to be affecting flow of commodities from Juba to Bor and its satellite markets which extend as far as Ayod County. Latest updates from Save the Children-UK (SC-UK) in Waat, Wuror and Nyirol indicate that sorghum prices are the highest there (2.4 pounds per kg) compared to all other markets in southern Sudan. One of the contributing factors to the high prices is the numerous ongoing conflicts between different groups including the neighboring Dinka of Bor that supplies the area. Additional updates from SC-UK indicate that most people now prefer barter trade where they can exchange livestock for grain. This might be because barter trade seems favorable to the livestock owners who are a majority, as they can obtain 350 kg of sorghum by giving a bull worth 700 pounds, which translates to 2 pounds per KG as opposed to buying cash in the market where it is more expensive.

A market study on Kapoeta, Torit, Nimule, Kajokeji and Yei markets conducted by FEWS NET during November – December found that the markets are more vibrant than previously thought, with most food commodities (maize, maize flour and sorghum) being imported from Uganda (maize, maize flour and sorghum) and a small amount from Kenya (maize). Below are additional details on markets situated in food insecure areas, namely Kapoeta, Torit and Nimule.

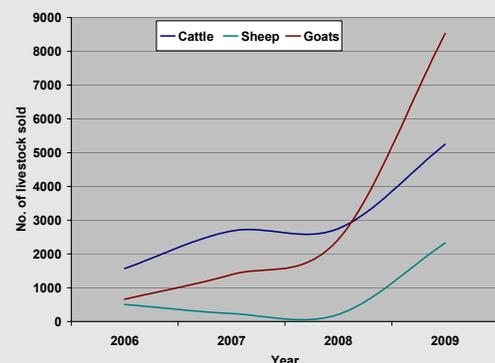
### Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) / FEWS NET Market Study – November-December 2009

**Kapoeta Market:** Since peace was signed in 2005, Toposa pastoralists have increasingly relied on this market to sell their livestock and purchase maize/sorghum grain sourced from Uganda through Torit market, and Kenya. Before 2005, livestock, the main income source for households, was trekked once every month to Agoro market in northern Uganda. Currently, livestock sales occur daily in Kapoeta, and animals are driven by trucks for sale in Juba and Torit. Figure 5 indicates livestock sales trends in Eastern Equatoria (including Kapoeta and Torit), confirming that livestock sales are becoming increasingly important.

Cattle ownership discussions held with the Kapoeta livestock office in August suggested that all households in the area owned livestock, with the least having 1-15 cattle and a similar number of shoats. Thus, monitoring of market conditions and indicators such as grain availability, flows and prices, livestock sales and prices, livestock movements and access to grazing and water are most important in this zone. Uganda and Kenya cross-border flows of food also remain important to monitor. As of end November, the Kenya-Sudan border had been closed due to conflict. Currently, there is also a ban on grain and flour exports from Kenya, but traders are informally sneaking in these commodities. Complete cutting of grain flows by Uganda and Kenya could have a serious negative impact on food security, especially in a context where government-subsidized grain and food aid are unavailable. Due to poor grain availability when rains failed last year, local authorities exempted traders from the grain tax so as to encourage and improve grain supply to Kapoeta and Narus markets.

**Torit Market:** Since the peace agreement was signed, displaced households (especially those displaced by the LRA) have returned to their original homes and re-established their livelihoods. Improved roads have made a remarkable positive impact in terms of cross-border

Figure 5. Livestock sales trends 2006-2009



Source: Eastern Equatoria livestock department -Torit

trade that has improved access to maize, flour (maize and wheat) and beans from Uganda. The main sources of income in Torit are brewing, livestock and sale of wood and charcoal. The capacity of the market to meet needs of households with purchasing power is fair but highly fragile because Torit market is dominated by foreign traders from Kenya and Uganda. Should there be conflict in areas neighboring Torit Town, foreign traders would potentially flee and this would interrupt the flow of food commodities. In the current food security context where crop performance is poor, households with little or no purchasing power are the ones facing food insecurity.

**Nimule Market:** As in Torit, improved roads have made a remarkable positive impact in terms of cross border trade and access to maize, flour (maize and wheat) and beans. Here, households still have kinship ties with those of nearby northern Uganda areas of Ajumani and Gulu where they often go to purchase food or get support from kin. For households near the border, access to grain from relatives or markets in Ajumani, Atiak and Gulu which are 1 to 4 hours drive into northern Uganda remains critical. Cassava, sorghum, maize, sweet potatoes and beans are available in the three markets. Maize is the most purchased commodity. Of concern is poor purchasing power of households as they are relying on charcoal and wood sales to purchase food. This practice is environmentally unsustainable. There are also many returnees, but there is also the advantage of members of the same household being located in both Sudan and Uganda. Apart from monitoring prices and flow of main food commodities into this market, other important factors to monitor include access to northern Ugandan markets, population movements across the border and cash income sources of households.

**A summary of how the markets have changed since 2005**

- Livestock trade has shifted away from Kenya and Uganda markets to Juba market
- Most animals are now transported by trucks; previously, animals had to walk long distances to markets
- Increased taxation since 2005 (traders concern)
- Increased commodity prices since 2005 (households concern)
- Improved road infrastructure has made markets more vibrant and active
- Increased demand for commodities,
- More traders involved in commodity trade
- Increased confidence in the markets

A finalized and more detailed report on this study will be available in February, 2010.

Source: MAF/FEWS NET study, 2009