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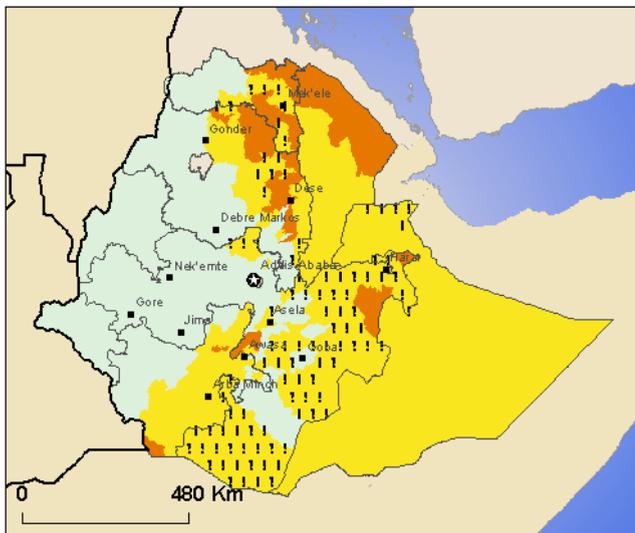
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Food Security Outlook

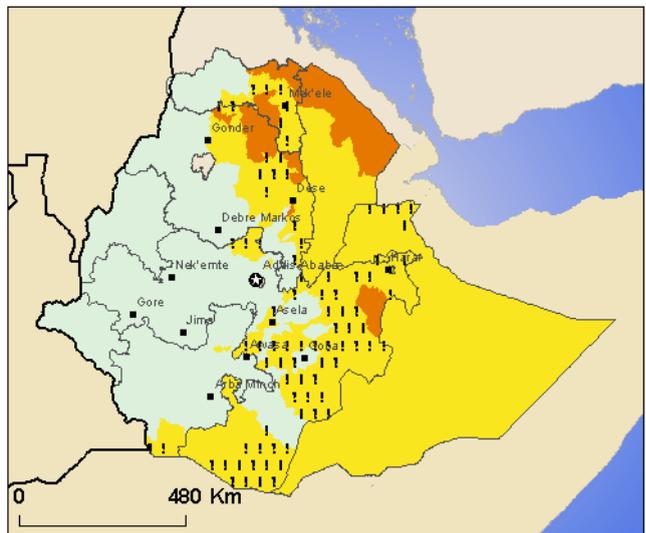
**Near normal Belg rains led to average area planted outside of eastern Oromia**

April 2014 to September 2014

Near Term



Medium Term



IPC V2.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase



**Key Messages:**

In general, the performance of February to May *Belg* rains had been near normal in terms of amount and temporal distribution from February until early April. However, since mid-April, almost no rain fell in *Belg*-growing areas. With early forecasts for the June to September *Kiremt* rainfall being mostly normal in terms of likely total rainfall, western, eastern, and

southern agricultural areas are expected to have average agricultural production this season, if the *Belg* rains resume in a timely fashion. Food security should start to improve in the *Belg*-producing areas in June and in October in areas further west.

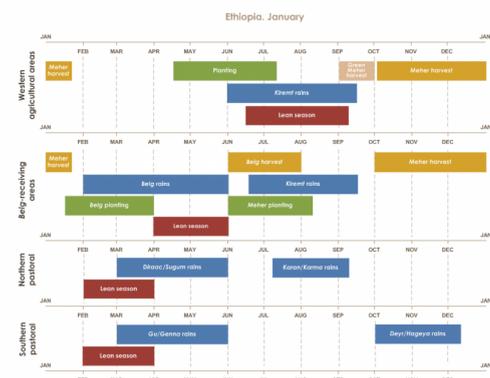
Household food security in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People’s Region (SNNPR) is expected to improve from Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from April to June to Minimal (IPC Phase 1) from July to September. Similarly, *Belg*-dominant areas of northeastern Amhara will likely improve from Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from April to June to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from July to September, if the *Belg* rains resume.

The March to May *Sugum/Diraac* rains started late in the northern pastoral areas whereas *Gu/Genna* rains in southern pastoral areas started on time and have been near normal in terms of amount. Pasture, browse, and water availability is expected to improve, helping increase household food and income access from livestock, and thus their food security, especially from July to September. However, very low livestock holdings due to recurrent droughts since 2010 in northeastern Afar along with the rising costs of food will likely keep that area in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through at least September.

## National Overview

### CURRENT SITUATION

- Shortage of pasture and water persists in the northeastern parts of Afar, and the March to May *Sugum* rains have been below average so far. Pasture and water availability have deteriorated since January, caused by poor performance of the July to September 2013 *Karma* rains coupled with the long dry season.
- The cumulative February to May *Belg* rains were mostly normal in most of the *Belg*-growing areas. The onset of the *Belg* rains was near normal in most *Belg*-growing areas. However, there was a two to three weeks delay in eastern parts of Oromia Region that led to delays in planting. In most areas, area planted approached normal, though it is currently low in eastern Oromia, and the planting window closes shortly.
- The onset of the *Gu/Genna* rains was one week early in most of the southern and southeastern pastoral areas. Moreover, cumulative rainfall and temporal and spatial distribution has been near normal thus far in most of the southern and southeastern pastoral areas. This has contributed to pasture and browse regeneration and the replenishment of water points.
- Staple food prices declined from December 2013 to February 2014. However, they have started to increase slightly since then in a mostly seasonal pattern. This is mainly due to the drawing down of the supplies from the *Meher* harvest, including households exhausting their stocks and starting to purchase from markets as their primary source of food. According to the Central Statistical Agency (CSA), food inflation in March was 6.1 percent at the annualized rate, compared to 4.7 percent



### SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR

Source: FEWS NET

in February.

- In general, the food security situation in the country is stable. However, food insecurity in northeastern parts of Afar, the Tekeze River catchment in Tigray and Amhara Regions, *Belg*-dominant areas of North and South Wollo Zones in Amhara Region, lowland areas of East Hararghe Zone, ginger-producing areas in SNNPR, and Dassench Woreda in SNNPR are food insecure, primarily due to below average rainfall or poorly distributed rainfall in 2013 along with other shocks such as plant disease and flooding.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

From April to September 2014, the projected food security outcomes are based on the following national assumptions:

- The *Belg* rains started somewhat late in a few areas of eastern Oromia and eastern Amhara, but overall, they were fairly normally distributed in March and early April. The rains have since subsided. However, the overall cumulative February to May *Belg* rainfall is likely to be near normal, based on international forecasts and those of the National Meteorological Agency (NMA) of Ethiopia.
- The June/July to August/September *Kiremt/Karma/Karan* rainfall is anticipated to be near normal in terms of cumulative rainfall based on recent long-range forecasts.
- Staple food prices are likely to continue to rise through July following the normal seasonal pattern but with a higher magnitude than usual, especially for sorghum. Then staple food prices are likely to remain high through September.
- Both emergency food aid and food and resource transfers from the Productive Safety Nets Program (PSNP) are likely to continue as scheduled from April to June. Emergency assistance is likely to continue after this in some areas.

## **MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES**

In the western and central surplus-producing areas of the country, households are able to meet their essential food and non-food needs from their own *Meher* harvest in 2013 and income generated from sale of the *Meher* production. These areas are expected to remain at Minimal (IPC Phase 1).

Lowland areas of East Hararghe Zone in eastern Oromia Region, the Tekeze River catchment in Amhara and Tigray Regions, northeastern parts of Tigray Region, and ginger-producing areas in SNNPR had locally below-average *Meher* harvests due to below average *Kiremt* rainfall and other shocks. Poor and very poor households in this area will likely remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through September as below average production will lead households to be more dependent on markets. With anticipated price increases, households will not be able to address their minimal food needs. Similarly, due to the well below-average 2013 *Belg* harvest in June/July 2013, poor and

very poor households in North and South Wollo Zones in Amhara Region will not be able to address their minimal food requirements and will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from April to June. The significant reduction on income from ginger sales due to well below-average ginger production in 2013 will keep the ginger-producing areas of SNNPR Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from April to June.

With the anticipated normal *Belg* harvest, poor and very poor households in North and South Wollo Zones in Amhara Region and ginger-producing areas in SNNPR will be able to address their minimal food needs from the *Belg* harvest in July/August. However, households in these areas will not be able to address their non-food needs, and they will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from July through at least September. However, with the anticipated near average *Belg* harvest, households' food access and income is expected to improve in most *Belg*-producing areas of SNNPR. In addition, in these areas, prices may decline as the *Belg* crops enter the market, effectively increasing household purchasing power. Many areas in SNNPR have already had successful vegetable production due to rains thus far. Moreover, households in *Meher*-producing areas in SNNPR will have additional food access from enset, potatoes, and green consumption of maize from August onwards. Therefore, most areas in SNNPR will enter Minimal (IPC Phase 1) from July to September 2014.

In pastoral areas, the anticipated normal *Sugum/Gu/Genna* rains are expected to further regenerate pasture and browse and increase water availability, resulting in improved livestock body conditions and milk availability. Following several seasons of near average or above average conditions, herd sizes are expected to slowly increase, increasing household purchasing power and eventually food security. However, the anticipated increase in staple food prices will still lead to a decline in the livestock to grain Terms of Trade (ToT) with households needing to sell more livestock to purchase cereals. Household income from self-employment, charcoal production, and other sources will not be able to keep up with the increasing prices. Despite some recent improvement in herd sizes, poor households will still not be able to address all necessary non-food needs. Therefore, most households in pastoral areas will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2). However, in northeastern pastoral areas in Afar Region, following below average *Karma* rains last year and the poor performance of March to April *Sugum* rains so far, households will need to increase their livestock sales beyond a sustainable level in order to purchase food. This area will continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through September 2014.

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## Areas of Concern

# Northern pastoral and agropastoral areas in Afar and northern Somali Region

## CURRENT SITUATION

The onset of March to May 2014 *Sugum/Diraac* rains was late by about two to three weeks in northern pastoral and agropastoral areas. However, rainfall has been somewhat near average with fairly regular temporal and spatial distribution in most parts of Kari (formerly Zone 5), Gabi (Formerly Zone 3), and Fenti (formerly Zone 4) Zones in Afar Region. Cumulative rain so far has been below average in Awsi (formerly Zone 1) and eastern part Kilbati (formerly Zone 2) Zones in Afar Region and in Sitti (formerly Shinile) and Fafan (formerly Jijiga) Zones in northern Somali Region. The current rain has not yet fully replenished vegetation, so in many areas there are still shortages of forage. Forage shortages are most severe in Dalul, Abala, and Megale Woredas in Kilbati Zone, Yallo, Gulina, and Ewa Woredas in Fenti Zone, Chifera and Mille Woredas in Gabi Zone in Afar Region, and Kabribeyah, Gursum, and Awbare Woredas in Fafan Zone, and Ayesha, Afedem, and Shinile Woredas in Sitti Zone in Somali Region.

Accordingly, livestock body conditions, productivity, and livestock product availability continued to decline, particularly in Afdera, Erebt, Abala, Berhale, and Dalul Woredas in Kilbati Zone in Afar Region. Though the forage shortage affects all livestock species, the lack of pasture has most affected grazing animals like sheep and cattle.

Almost no *Dadaa* rains fell in December and January. Then there was a late onset of the March to May *Sugum/Diraac* rains, which cause early depletion of forage, a level of livestock migration, and extended the dry and hot *Jilaal* season. To feed their livestock, households have migrated their livestock in search of pasture and water, gathering tree branches for fodder, used wild-collected tree fruits as fodder, made hay purchases. Unseasonably high levels of livestock migration have been observed from Awsi Zone to Chefa Woreda in Amhara Region. Similar migration has been observed from Kibleti Zone to Wajerat, Raya, Mehoni, Agula, Wukro, and Atsebi Woredas in Tigray Region. Livestock from Gabi Zone have been migrated to Fentale Woreda in Oromia Region. As early as January, livestock had been migrated from Yallo, Berhale, Erebt, and Sumurobi Woredas. These livestock are now returning to these woredas due to the onset of the rains.

Water availability for livestock and human consumption improved following the onset of March to May *Sugum/Diraac* rains. Water availability remained stable for livestock and human consumption along the major perennial rivers in Afambo, Asaita, Dubti, Mille, Awash Fentale, Amibara, Buremudayitu, Gewane, and Dulecha Woredas in Afar Region. However, some areas where the current rains have not fully become established had water shortages. In some of these areas, the regional education bureau has reported 25 percent of students dropped out of school, including Bidu, Kori, Erebt, and Elidar

Woredas. The recently conducted water need gaps survey in Afar Region identified about 24,000 people for water assistance at a time of year when usually water trucking is not needed.

Since January 2014, cereal supply increased in most of Afar Region and Sitti and Fafan Zones as a result of the start of PSNP and emergency food aid transfers. This has stabilized market prices. However, compared to the same period last year, relief wheat prices in March 2014 increased by 25, 18, and 13 percent in Ababa, Jijiga, and Shinile, respectively, due to high demand. On the other hand, livestock prices in March declined or remained stable in most parts of Afar due high supply as result of the prevailing dryness and poor body conditions. Livestock to cereal terms of trade (ToT) declined in Awsi, Kibleti, and Hari Zones in Afar Region. However, goat and sheep prices in Jijiga have increased 44 percent from March 2013 to March 2014.

Child malnutrition increased at the end of the dry season in most areas. The situation was exacerbated as result of poor hygiene, sanitation, more limited assistance from the World Food Program (WFP), and a lack of therapeutic supplementary food (TSF) supplies in some areas.

The average to above average 2013 *Karma* rains and the start of the 2013 *Sugum/Diraac* rains improved the availability of water, pasture, and browse in most parts of Afar and the northern parts of Somali Regions. Consequently, livestock body conditions, productivity, and livestock product supply should sustain household food and income. This will enable households to address their minimal food needs, and therefore poor and very poor households in Afar and northern parts of Somali Regions are currently in Stressed (IPC Phase 2), consuming food but unable to meet all necessary non-food expenses. However, poor and very poor households in Dalul, Berhale, Erebt, Afedera, Elidar, Bidu, and Kurri Woredas in northeastern Afar are unable to address all their food needs. Poor and very poor households in northeastern part of Afar are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

In addition to the national assumptions above, the projected food security outcomes for the northern pastoral and agropastoral areas are based on the following assumptions:

- As result of improved livestock body conditions, livestock prices will likely slightly increase from July to September.

## **MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES**

The average *Sugum/Diraac* rains between now and the end of May coupled with the expected near normal July to September *Karma/Karan* rains will likely increase livestock production and productivity. This will enable pastoral and agropastoral households to attain more food and income from livestock products, livestock product sales, and livestock sales. In addition, emergency food assistance and PSNP food assistance are expected to continue until June, helping keep cereal prices stable. Though income from salt mining labor is not expected to increase over the next six months due to the expected increase in surface and sub-surface water in the salt mining areas, the income obtained from improved livestock products and sale of livestock will enable poor households to fulfill their minimal food consumption needs. However, still having small herd sizes, poor and very poor households have not yet fully recovered enough livestock to generate adequate income for households to address all of their non-food needs. Therefore, poor and very poor households in the northwestern and southern part of Afar Region and Sitti and Fafan Zones in Somali Region will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through September 2014.

Though the current *Sugum/Diraac* rains is anticipated to perform normally in the northeastern part of Afar Region, livestock body conditions and productivity are not expected to fully recover from previous poor seasons, hindering households to address their minimal food needs. Moreover, despite the start of the rains in some parts northeastern parts of Afar, migration stress along with the particularly hot and long dry season have made them less saleable at this point. Therefore, poor household in Dalul, Berhale, Erebti, Afedera, Elidar, Bidu, and Kurri Wordas in Afar Region are likely to continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through at least September 2014.

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## About Scenario Development

To project food security outcomes, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to arrive at a most likely scenario for the coming six months. Learn more here.

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