

SKBN Coordination Unit

Humanitarian Update

February 2020



WFP school feeding program in South Kordofan

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Blue Nile

Far-farm harvests have come to an end across the region with the exception of Wadaka payam, which is still harvesting due to late planting in October. Good yields were recorded since the crops were not damaged by the previous floods and heavy rainfall.

Though Blue Nile normally suffers from the highest levels of hunger, improvements in food security have been reported across the four payams. In Chali payam (for instance, households are entirely consuming food from their own production). In Marinje, Yabus Payam, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, watermelon and lemons are available. Mangoes will soon be harvested in Balila in Wadaka, Jindi in Chali and Moguf and Belatuma in Yabus payams.

Despite reports of improved food security, households are already reporting lack of food stocks. The primary cause of poor harvests was pests, affecting short-duration sorghum. Flooding and heavy rain also had an impact on food production. In Yabus for instance, less than a quarter of the households have started depending on markets as the source of their food. However, only a quarter of the households can afford to buy food and sustain these purchases for long. Communities in Komo Ganza have recorded lack of food stocks as a result of very poor farm production due to floods and rain. In addition, the soil is not suitable for crops such as sorghum. Communities are now depending solely on markets, selling ground nuts, sweet potatoes, yams, dry okra among others in exchange of food.

As earlier reported, communities in Chali and Yabus engaged in economic activities such cutting of grass, lumbering and charcoal burning as an alternative source of income. In Yabus for example, bamboo became the most valuable resource and sold in larger quantities to Maban. On the other hand, mining continued in Wadaka and Yabus payams.

South Kordofan

With far farm harvests almost complete, it is evident that the agricultural season did not perform well, which will have an impact on food security as the lean season progresses. Harvests appear to have been bad particularly in Western Kadguli where around 80 per cent of households reported below normal harvests. The crops worst affected by the floods were short-duration sorghum and ground nuts, which are of great importance to this part of the region. Households are already reporting that they have no food, which means that the majority of households will need to purchase sorghum earlier this year and sustain these purchases for longer than normal. This is a concern and needs to be closely monitored.

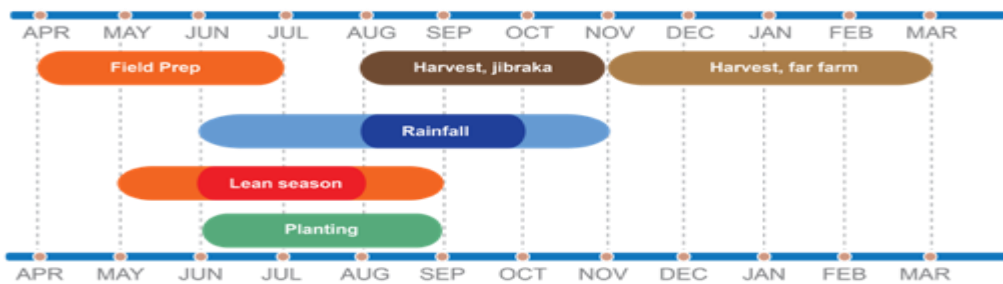
Western Jebels

Poor harvests were realized in Al Sunut with reports of people suffering from moderate hunger. This was accompanied by an increase in the percentage of households resorting to extreme coping strategies. In Habila, the harvest was also not good, with many households reporting below-normal harvests. In Dilling, there was an increase in the percentage of households with no food stocks – as a result, there is a likelihood that households will be food insecure by the end of March.

Highlights:
Market prices continue to raise

Poor harvest raises food insecurity

Continued increase of movement into the Two Areas



Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and Blue Nile

Market Functionality

Blue Nile

Markets were functional with Ethiopian and South Sudanese traders as well as local traders mainly from the refugee camps in Maban turning up. However, prices remain high in the area. For instance, in Balila market, the price of a cow rose from 70,000 SSP in January to 100,000 SSP in February, a malwa of sorghum rose from 300 SSP in January to 500 SSP in February, a malwa of sesame rose from 1000 SSP in January to 1500 SSP and beans from 1000 SSP to 1400 SSP in February.

On the other hand, milk was in abundance due to the presence of a high number of Fallata nomads across the region.

South Kordofan

There were price variations of different food crops in South Kordofan. For instance, in Um Durain, the price of sorghum fell from 500 SSP in January to 400 SSP in February, whereas in Thobo A, a malwa of ground nuts increased from 150 SSP in January to 250 SSP in February.

Western Jebels

In the markets monitored, price increases have been reported. For example, in Umjimaina market, a malwa of sorghum has increased from 70 SDG in January to 80 SDG in February, sesame rose from 180 SDG to 190 SDG and a liter of petrol increased from 180 SDG to 200 SDG in February moreover it is very scarce.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

South Kordofan

Cases of cough have been reported in Heiban while malaria and acute watery diarrhea mainly in children were reported in Thobo. Medical facilities have reported lack of drugs. Furthermore, only two hospitals (Gidel "Mother of Mercy" Hospital and the GED/German Emergency Doctors facility) are operating in the area.

According to the [FSMU Quarterly Report](#) November 2019 - January 2020, malnutrition measurements in South Kordofan showed that conditions are poor. 20 per cent of the 375 children measured showed either severe or moderate acute malnutrition with higher levels in Dallami.

Western Jebels

Malaria, skin infection, pneumonia and urinary tract infection cases among adults have been reported. The available clinics have reported lack of drugs. No immunization exercise has taken place in the recent months.

In regard to malnutrition, Western Jebels is in poor condition in terms of malnutrition, with 2 per cent of children under five classified in Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) range, and 19 per cent in the Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) range. This was heavily influenced by Lagawa where malnutrition rates were very high.

WASH

Blue Nile

As the dry season continues, water is a major challenge in Blue Nile, especially in Abu Dira and Benamo/Aqontayo in Wadaka and Yabus payams, where most natural water bodies are drying up. In Abu Dira, for example, local communities share natural water sources with animals creating a health risk.

In Benamo/Qontayo, boreholes have been dug, but it is difficult to pump water because of the area being so rocky. In Hillat Ful in Komo Ganza and Hilat Jadid in Yabus payam, with the highest numbers of IDPs face water scarcity all year round.

South Kordofan

There is need for more boreholes especially in Thobo and Western Kadguli. Notably water shortage was also recorded Heiban in some villages of Kauda, Karindi and Kambara A. The population is still taking from the streams shared by animals, putting people at risk of contracting waterborne diseases.

Western Jebels

On February 17, a workshop on WASH, health and education was conducted and the purpose of the workshop was to identify priority needs in the three sectors. The number one priority is Education followed by Health and the third being WASH.

EDUCATION

Blue Nile

Resources for education in Blue Nile are scarce, likely creating a situation worse than South Kordofan. 47 Primary schools are fully operational across the four payams. However, the quality of education remains very low in an area without any secondary school and tertiary institutions. More support is needed in this sector.

South Kordofan

All the 272 primary schools and 12 secondary schools are in session. However, support in this area is required in terms of trained teachers, teachers' incentives and scholastic materials.

On the school feeding program, out of 260 schools in the region, WFP distributed food to only 12 primary schools. There's need to scale up school feeding program and cater for all schools in the Two Areas.

Western Jebels

All primary and secondary schools are in session. Communities struggle to keep schools functioning in the region. Lack of trained teachers, lack of leaning and teaching materials are some of the challenge in the education sector.

ANIMAL HEALTH

Blue Nile

Animal health has relatively improved in the region, although bovine cough and tsetse flies have been reported as a major threat to livestock.

South Kordofan

Lack of veterinary drugs and skin diseases have been reported, which remains a challenge to livestock keeping in the region. With general deterioration of animal health, poor quality meat and products have been recorded

Western Jebels

Drug supply and lack of good pasture have been reported

As dry season continues, animals walk far to reach water points, this makes them grow thin.

PROTECTION, ACCESS AND SECURITY

Blue Nile

According to police in Yabus, four cases of human rights abuse and harassment were reported in February and are being handled at county level, including one where a 13-year-old girl was abused by an adult on February 11, 2020.

According to records from Yabus, movements from Ethiopia to South Sudan through Blue Nile have been registered. The month of February witnessed a good number of Mabanese, mainly students moving back to Ethiopia for studies. A total of 240 Mabanese and 246 Ethiopians were also registered at in the border crossing.

The local leadership also confirmed registering returnees in their respective villages mostly students. In Yabus Bala alone, 1800 returnees were registered by local authorities in January-February 2020.

South Kordofan

Migration of new households continued into the SPLMN-controlled areas. Highest numbers of migration have been reported in Um Durain and Dallami being the second highest. Most of the newly arrived households continued to come from refugee camps while the rest came from either government-controlled areas or other SPLM-N-controlled areas.

Western Jebels

There have been reports of cattle rustling in the area resulting into intertribal clashes.

There is free movement of goods and people from SAF-controlled markets to A3.

The SKBN CU reports security incidents according to the information received from a variety of sources. This information does not include a comprehensive verification of perpetrators or damages.

This monthly update on humanitarian issues in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states is compiled by the SKBN Coordination Unit. With three main functions of information, coordination and advocacy, the SKBNCU strives to put out regular and accurate information on the humanitarian situation of people affected by the conflict since 2011.

Please send your comments to advocacy@skbncu.org

