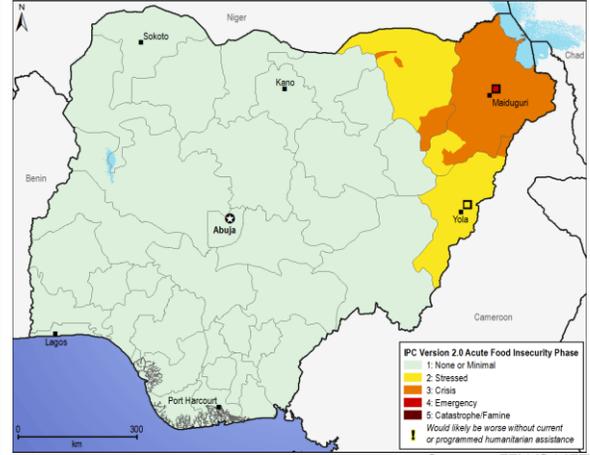


The main harvest brings an end to the lean season in most areas across the country

KEY MESSAGES

- The main harvest is underway across the country, increasing food availability, access, and diversity for most households. Livestock terms of trade for pastoral and agropastoral households are also improving. With the increased availability of market and household food stocks, food availability and access will remain good for most though at least March 2016. As such, much of the country will experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity between October 2015 and March 2016.
- Boko Haram conflict continues to strongly affect food security in the northeast. While new harvest stocks will improve food availability, production is well below average. Many rural, resident households and IDPs will continue to face difficulty meeting their minimal food needs. Much of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, as well as informal settlements in greater Maiduguri, will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March 2016.
- IDPs and households less directly impacted by the conflict in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa still experience restrictions to their normal livelihoods. Conflict is also contributing to reduced market activity. Households in these areas continue to forgo essential non-food needs in an effort to meet their basic food needs, and as such will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through the March 2015.

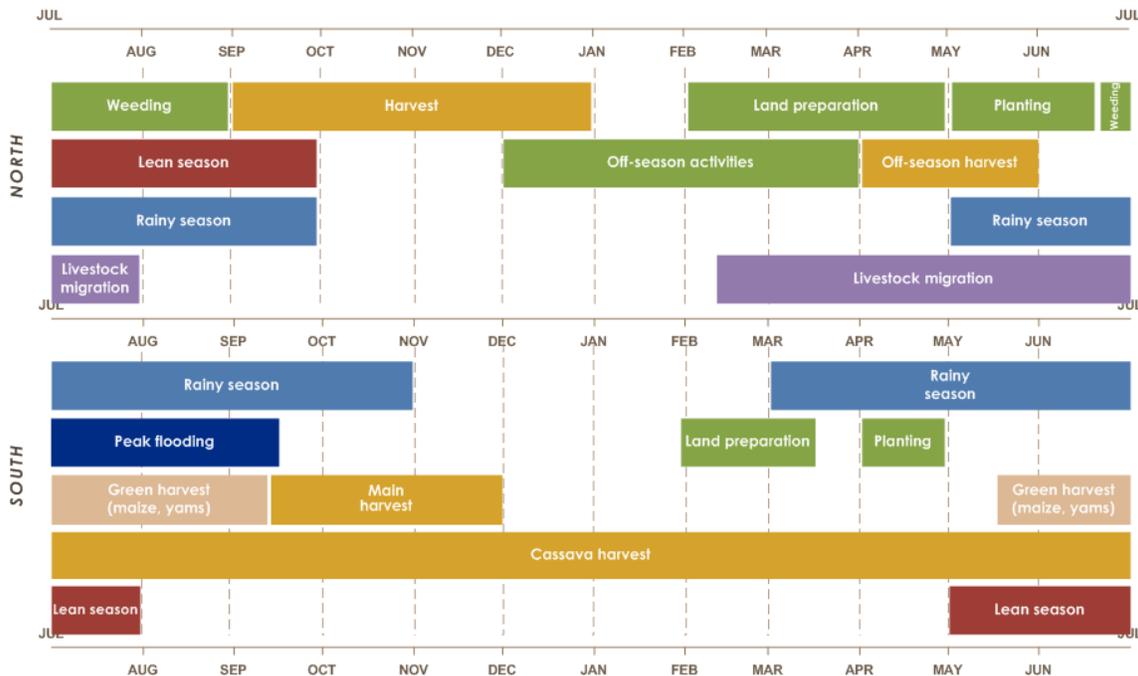
Current food security outcomes, October 2015



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#).

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

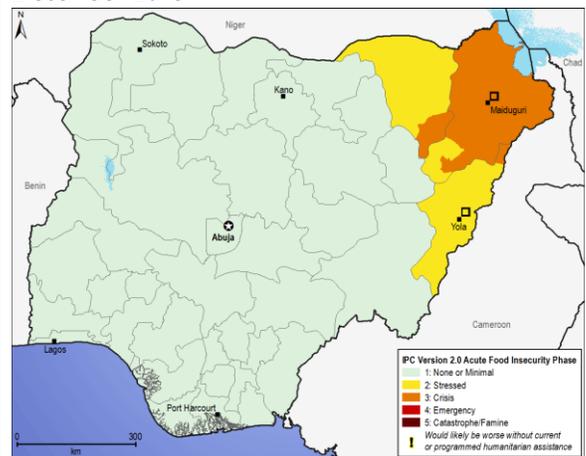
The March to November main cultivation season this year has been characterized by a late onset of rains with intermittent dry spells early in the season. Since July, however, average to above-average precipitation with good temporal and spatial distribution has been recorded across most of the country, particularly in the Sahel (Figure 1). While the strong rains were generally beneficial in making up rainfall deficits experienced earlier in the season in most areas, they also contributed to heavy flooding in localized areas of Jigawa, Kebbi, Sokoto, Katsina, Zamfara (northwest), Adamawa, Yobe, Taraba, Gombe, Bauchi (northeast), Benue, Plateau, Kaduna, Kwara, Kogi, Niger (central), Edo, Rivers, and Cross River (south) impacting cropped area and leading to large losses of productive assets. Some localized areas in the east (in and around Niger State), as well as the bi-modal south, continue to experience atypical dryness, though, even after the pickup in rainfall beginning in July. The seasonal decent southward of the West Africa rains has been timely to slightly later than usual, which has been leading to a typical to slightly later than normal end of season in October for the Sahelian north. In central and southern regions, rainfall continues seasonably in October.

The main harvest for major staples (primarily yam, cassava, and maize) continues in central and southern regions, while the main harvest of staples cereals in the north (primarily maize and millet) has recently begun in September/October. Because of the delayed onset of the season, the harvest for staple cereals began a couple of weeks late in many areas. Other main crops, such as groundnut, cowpea, melon seed and other tubers, are also being harvested across the country. Harvest prospects for major staples in most areas across the country are for average to slightly below-average production for the 2015/16 main harvest. The joint NAERLS/FEWS NET/Government and partners' pre-harvest assessment conducted in September indicated that for staple cereals the decline in production compared to last year is expected to be three percent for maize, six percent for sorghum, and three percent for millet. Rice production, however, is expected to be up by 15 percent compared to 2014/15. Similarly, production for cash crops is also expected to be up against last year by 21 percent for sesame, 13 percent for soybean, seven percent for cowpea, and four percent for groundnut.

The poor start to the season, Boko Haram conflict, and localized flooding are the main drivers of the below-average cereal production in affected areas. Farmers also found fertilizer from the government through the Growth Enhancement Scheme was largely unavailable during the cropping season. Open market fertilizer costs were between NGN5,000 and NGN6,000/50kg bag, reducing access for most farmers who have limited capacity to purchase. Government subsidized fertilizers had usually sold for NGN1,000 to NGN3,500/50kg.

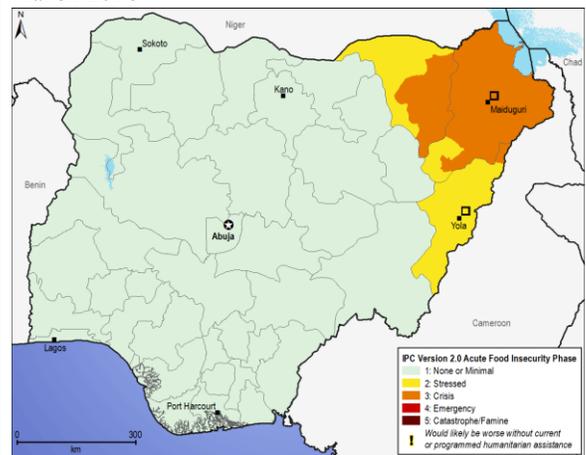
Continued rains in the center and south of the country are providing adequate rainfall for second season plantings of maize and cassava. In the bi-modal south, however, these plantings are occurring late in many areas due to the late arrival of the second season. Wage labor activities for agricultural households across the country are currently largely dependent on harvest work, though farmers in the center and south of the country are also employing assistance for planting and crop tending activities for the second season. At the national level wage labor incomes are generally near-average owing to adequate labor demand resulting from a near-average agricultural production season.

Projected food security outcomes, October to December 2015



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, January to March 2016



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#).

Although national-level production is expected to be average to slightly below average, the ongoing harvests are resulting in seasonal increases in food availability for staple cereals (millet, sorghum, maize), tubers (yams, cassava) and cash crops (cowpea, groundnuts) across most markets. Market prices in September remained relatively stable against previous months, though they are expected to have begun to decrease in October in both surplus and deficit producing areas. In September, millet prices remained relatively stable on Dawanau, Gombe, Bodija, Damaturu, and Maiduguri markets against August. Similarly, millet and sorghum also remained stable on Maiduguri market within the same period. A bag of millet, the major staple in Maiduguri, sold for NGN6,260/100kg in September, and although that price is relatively lower than last year at the same time (NGN6,800/100kg), it remains much higher than in neighboring markets - Dawanau (NGN4,976/100kg), Gombe (NGN4,500/100kg), Damaturu (NGN4,700). Due to delayed harvests in the southwest, maize prices did increase from NGN7,500/100kg in August to NGN8,300/100kg in September on Bodija market, while the price of gari remained stable. Gari, which sold for NGN73/kg on Bodija market at the same time last year, now sells for NGN87/kg. This is attributable to the prolonged dry spells and late onset of the season, impacting cassava production and delaying the harvest.

Pastoral conditions for livestock remain largely typical. The good rainfall beginning in July contributed to good pasture growth in most areas and water availability for animals. Livestock prices are generally near average and pastoral and agropastoral households are earning typical incomes from livestock sales. Continued cattle rustling and intercommunal conflict in the Middle Belt region, however, affects impacted household's access to income and markets for food purchase. Poultry farmers continue to be affected by the ongoing outbreak of avian influenza, which has spread to 21 states and FCT Abuja, and has led to the depopulation of more than 1.5 million birds.

Northeast Nigeria

While food availability and access remains good throughout most of the country, food security in northeast Nigeria continues to be significantly impacted by ongoing Boko Haram conflict. Conflict has once again this year significantly impacted area planted and reduced farmers ability to tend their crops. Although production estimates are not yet available for the 2015/16 season, production is expected to be down against last year due to the increasing displacement and persisting conflict throughout the cultivation season. Although harvests, which begin in October, are expected to improve food access for rural, resident households, production stocks will be very significantly below normal, particularly for households that remain in worst-affected areas.

Households continue to flee rural areas of northeast Nigeria, with many going to neighboring Chad, Cameroon and Niger. Most, however, are moving to urban centers in the northeast. According to the [most recent IOM/NEMA report](#) on displacement there were more than two million people displaced by conflict in northeast Nigeria as of August 31st. In Maiduguri alone, there were more than one million IDPs. Yobe State is hosting nearly 200,000 IDPs and Adamawa State is hosting nearly 120,000 IDPs. The [June report from IOM/NEMA](#) identified just more than 1.3 million people displaced by

Figure 1. ARC2 3-Month Percent of Normal Rainfall, July – September 2015

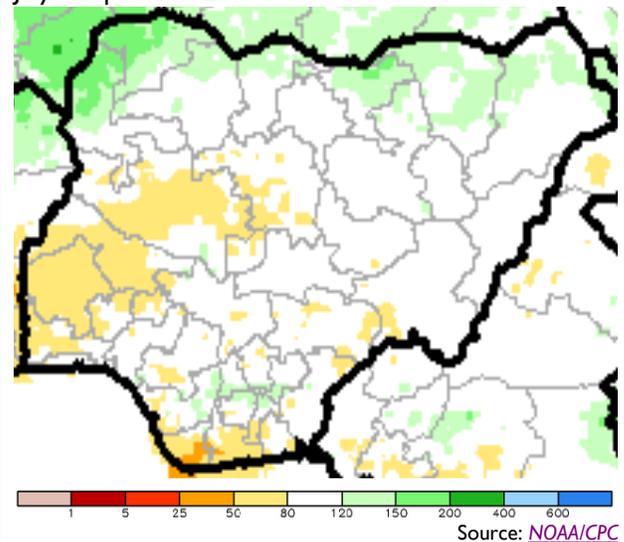
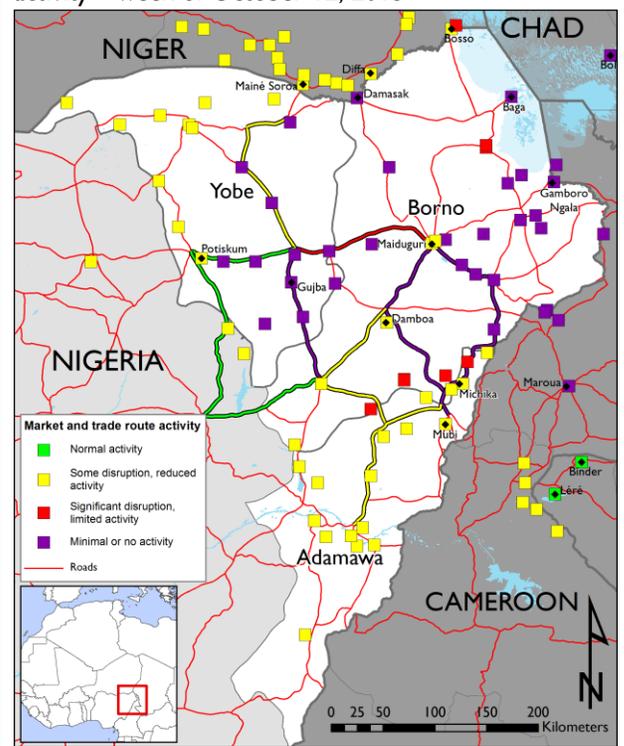


Figure 2. Northeast Nigeria market and trade route activity – week of October 12, 2015



conflict. Displaced households still face difficulty accessing food as their access to income earning opportunities remain strained. The August IOM/NEMA report noted that less than 10 percent of IDPs have access to formal camps. The vast majority of IDPs are in informal settlements or with host families.

Humanitarian actors and government have intensified their efforts in providing support to affected populations in the northeast. The Federal and State Governments through NEMA, PINE, VSF and SEMA have been providing some food and non-food support to IDPs. Similarly, humanitarian organizations are also assisting IDPs with food, WASH, and non-food assistance. The current level of support, however, is not able to target all displaced families, particularly those residing outside of official camps.

Market activity and trade flows in northeast Nigeria and neighboring regions in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad also remains disrupted (Figure 2). In addition to direct and indirect impacts the conflict has on market activity, the government has also been advising some major markets close as they have become targets for attacks. While staple food prices in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, remain high compared to markets in neighboring states less affected by the conflict, prices in Mubi, in Adamawa State, are even higher. In September, millet sold for NGN84/kg on Mubi market against NGN60/kg on Monday market in Maiduguri. The price of millet on Monday market in Maiduguri was NGN6,300 in September, higher than all neighboring markets in the region, except on Mubi market where it was NGN10,760/100kg.

From September 3-30, 2015, FEWS NET conducted a food security survey in three contiguous, rural Local Government Areas (LGAs) of northeast Nigeria in the North-Central Maize, Sorghum, and Cotton Livelihoods Zone that have been affected by prolonged conflict. Approximately 25 households were surveyed in each of the 21 villages in Chibok, Askira/Uba (Borno) and Michika (Adamawa) visited during the assessment, for a total of 520 households. Although sufficient population data was not available to design a representative random sample for the assessment, FEWS NET made every effort to design a sampling framework that would minimize selection bias. Results from the Household Hunger Scale (HHS) survey found 41.48 percent of households experiencing Moderate to Severe hunger in the household and the average the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) was 5.50, with 18.47 percent of households experiencing an HDDS of less than four. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among the sample was found to be 32.40 percent (95% CI: 28.03-36.77) for children with mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) < 12.5 cm, and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) among the sample was 3.02 percent (95% CI: 1.36-4.69) for children with MUAC < 11.5 cm. Although the food consumption indicators do not present a situation as dire as previously expected, they do demonstrate restricted access to food in the household. The high levels of acute GAM do reveal a very concerning nutrition situation, far exceeding the WHO *Critical* threshold for acute malnutrition.

Both FAO and the Nigeria INGO forum have conduct recent surveys in the northeast with food security components. Food consumption and nutrition indicators from the FAO FSLA and the INGO survey demonstrated high levels of food insecurity remain a concern for many throughout the northeast.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for the October 2015 to March 2016 period is based on the following national level assumptions:

- **Main season harvest production:** Crop growth and development was delayed due to the late onset of the season and intermittent dry spells across many areas of the country. This, coupled with severe flooding in some areas, Boko Haram conflict impacting cropping in the northeast, and limited access to inputs, will likely lead to below average harvests in many areas. The forecast typical end of the season in central and southern Nigeria is expected to contribute to making up for rainfall deficits experienced during the beginning of the second season, favoring good crop development.
- **Agricultural labor:** Labor opportunities will peak during the harvest period between October and December. Agriculture related labor wages will follow normal seasonal trends in most areas. In conflict prone areas of the northeast, labor supply will be above average in many areas due to the increase in the number of IDPs in search of labor work. Labor demand in the northeast will be below average due to limited agricultural activities in the area, further contributing to reduced total incomes.
- **Pastoral resources/transhumance:** Pastoral resources will be readily available through at least March 2016. Pasture availability will likely be longer due to restricted migrant pastoralists from neighboring countries as the conflict and cattle rustling activities persist in some parts of the country.
- **Off-season cropping:** Water availability for the dry season activities will be adequate and off-season activities are expected to begin normally in December.

- **Staple food and livestock demand:** Household food demand will decline substantially as usual through December owing to new harvest stocks. Agricultural households' food stocks will be replenished, reducing market purchase needs through at least March 2016. Livestock demand will decline in October and November after the Tabaski holiday. However, livestock demand will peak again in December during the Christmas holiday, contributing to higher sale prices for pastoralist. Normal seasonal trends will be observed from January through March 2016 for livestock prices.
- **Staple food and livestock supply:** Market stocks between October and December will improve gradually as the harvest reach markets. However, the rate of replenishment will be slower than normal due to below-average harvest production in many areas. Livestock supply will follow normal seasonal trends.
- **Regional carry-over stocks:** Carry-over cereal stocks within the region will be average to above average due to consecutive years of good harvests most areas within the region.
- **Price trends:** Staple food prices between October and December will continue to decline seasonally as new harvests reach markets and households purchase needs are seasonably low. This will continue through March early 2016 as most households still consume own food stocks. Food prices will begin to increase again in March as traders will begin to restock and institutional purchases begin, increasing market demand.
- **Conflict and displacement:** Boko Haram conflict is expected to continue to restrict household livelihoods, limit market activity, and contribute to continued displacement.
- **Intercommunal conflict and cattle rustling:** Intercommunal conflict in the central states will continue to disrupt livelihoods, particularly in the Middle Belt region.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The main harvests will lead to increased food availability and diversity for most households across the country through at least March 2016. Poor households will have increased access to income through agricultural labor work, contributing to increased food access relative to the lean season, which ended in most areas in September. Favorable pastoral resources will also improve livestock body conditions and contribute to seasonably good incomes for the pastoralists. **Most areas in Nigeria will experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity between October 2015 and March 2016.**

Northeast Nigeria, however, still troubled by Boko Haram conflict, continues to face high levels of acute food insecurity. Ongoing main season harvests, although well below average, are expected to improve food availability for rural, resident households through early 2016. Owing though to the below-average household production, households are expected to smooth their consumption of own stocks in the expectation stocks will not carry them as far through the consumption year as usual. Displaced households, largely in urban areas, will also continue to face difficulty meeting their basic food needs as their access to income earning opportunities remains limited. Food access through market purchase for households throughout the northeast will remain limited as continued conflict restricts market functioning. **Between October 2015 and December 2016, rural, resident households in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States worst-affected by conflict, as well as IDPs in informal settlements in greater Maiduguri, will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity. Most other areas in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2).**

AREAS OF CONCERN

Informal Settlements in Greater Maiduguri, Borno State

Current Situation

Maiduguri is the major commercial center in the Lake Chad region, bordering Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. In addition to leading to loss of life, Boko Haram conflict in the region continues to lead to large population displacements, most of which are to Maiduguri. The shift in conflict last year from urban to rural areas is a major driver of the displacement of large populations to urban areas. The multinational joint military task force continues operations in the northeast and the military has also directed populations within the area of their activities to relocate from the area to avoid civilian casualties, contributing to further population displacement. Although it remains difficult to directly ascertain the size of the displaced population, the [most recent IOM/NEMA report](#) on displacement identified more than one million IDPs in Maiduguri as of August 31st, 2015, and that number is expected to have increased since. Less than 10 percent of IDPs in Borno State have

access to living in official camps or camp like sites, with the vast majority living in informal settlements or with host families. The IDPs in official camps are housed in worship centers, schools, and other government buildings.

FEWS NET’s recent assessment to Maiduguri indicated a certain levels of IDPs continue to return back to areas reclaimed by military forces. However, the volatile conflict across the northeast still contributes to fear of return for many and continued new and re-displacement. As there remains extremely limited humanitarian access to most rural areas in the northeast, many IDPs choose to remain in urban centers in the hopes of having some access to humanitarian assistance.

In addition to humanitarian support for some and charity, displaced households in informal settlements in greater Maiduguri also rely heavily on market purchase to meet their food needs. The most frequent sources of income noted for displaced households during FEWS NET assessments to Maiduguri are begging, petty trade, and casual labor. Given the large number of displaced households in Maiduguri, access to these different sources of income remain limited, though not as limited as during the pre-harvest period from July to September 2015. Community support, though, remains the main source of food and non-food items for IDPs.

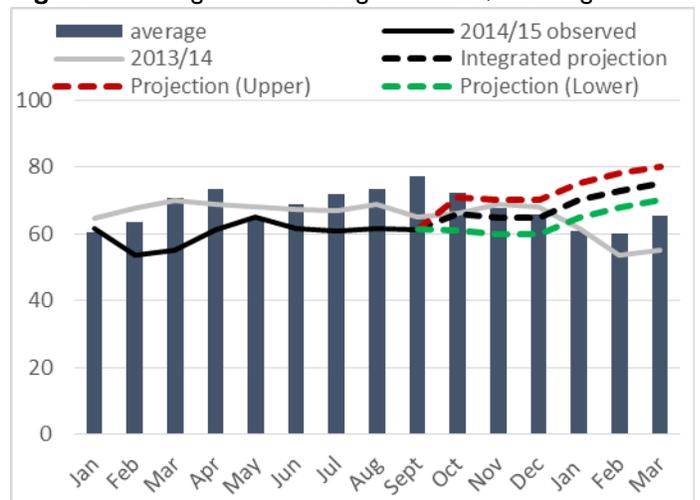
Market functioning in Maiduguri, although somewhat disrupted, continues to operate and respond somewhat sufficiently to local demand. Market prices for staple foods, however, remain well above those seen on neighboring markets in areas less impacted by the conflict. A bag of millet, the major staple in Maiduguri, sold for NGN6,260/100kg in September, and although that price is relatively lower than last year at the same time (NGN6,800/100kg), it remains much higher than in neighboring markets - Dawanau (NGN4,976/100kg), Gombe (NGN4,500/100kg), Damaturu (NGN4,700). In the face of limited incomes, high market prices further contribute to restricted market access.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for the October 2015 to March 2016 period is based on the following assumptions:

- This scenario is developed with the assumption Boko Haram conflict and related displacement will continue at current rates.
- Community assistance for displaced households will continue. However, this will become further stretched as the size of the IDP population continues to increase.
- Trade routes within the region will remain open, contributing to market food supply.
- Prices for staple foods are expected to increase beginning in early 2016 (Figure 3) due both to limited local supply due to significantly below-average harvests and increased demand for market purchase with the expected increase in displacement to Maiduguri.
- Access to petty trade and casual labor opportunities will remain limited due to the high number of displaced families in Maiduguri contributing to increased competition for work.

Figure 3. Maiduguri Brown Sorghum Prices, NGN/kg



Source: FEWS NET

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Increased economic activity in Maiduguri during the harvest period is expected to contribute to a marginal increase in access to income earning opportunities in Maiduguri as well as an increase in the local population’s capacity to assist displaced households. IDPs in informal settlements in greater Maiduguri will still, however, continue to face significant difficulty meeting their basic food needs as market access remains limited. Restricted incomes and high market prices make purchase difficult. **In October, many IDPs in informal settlements are still expected to be facing large food consumption gaps and be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) acute food insecurity. Although the situation will improve somewhat beginning**

in late October/early November, many IDP households will still not be able to completely meet their basic food needs and face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March 2016.

Northeast Millet, Cowpea and Sesame Zone – Livelihood Zone 12 in Borno and Yobe States

Current Situation

The rainy season across much of the zone began two to three weeks late in June. However, seasonally good rainfall beginning in mid-July and continuing throughout much of the rest of the season through September proved beneficial for those who are able to plant. Cultivation for most households throughout the zone in Borno and Yobe States, though, was once again this year hindered by continuing conflict. Area planted was significantly down compared to normal, and many households did not plant tall-growing cereals as they were advised against doing so for fear insurgents would hide in them. Recent FEWS NET assessments to Yobe and Maiduguri revealed that for those households able to cultivate, crop growth varied widely from vegetative/flowering stages to fully mature. Crop production in the zone is expected to be very significantly below-average again this year and harvests that do come in will be late due to the delayed start of season. Additionally, restricted market functioning limits those households who harvest, particularly cash crops, from having effective mechanisms for selling their crops. Although limited, ongoing harvests are contributing to increased food availability for rural, resident households that experienced a much longer than usual lean season.

Conflict in more rural areas of the northeast continues. Ongoing violence keeps households from their normal livelihood activities, which in addition to cultivating own crops, would typically include agricultural wage labor jobs. Availability of wage labor and participation are both down due to the limited productivity and household fears of working in the open. This is further compounded by restrictions on movement in and out of many communities.

Around the Tabaski holiday in September and early October, livestock sales increased somewhat for those households in the zone who were still able to keep livestock. Although many pastoral and agropastoral households have either left the area or have already sold many of their livestock, reports indicated there are still some households able to keep livestock in the area. Livestock body conditions are also generally good owing to good pastoral resource availability. Traders were also able to come from Chad, Niger and Cameroon in September to sell livestock in the zone.

Recent FEWS NET assessments to the northeast and reports from FEWS NET field informants indicate major markets in the region (Maiduguri, Potiskum, Damaturu) were operating at improved levels in September. However, in mid-October a large part of semi-urban markets within the zone are closed or only operating at minimal levels due to directives from the military. As markets become more and more targeted, the closure of many markets in the northeast had been recommended. The recent attacks on Geidam market, a major cross border market with Niger, Damaturu and Gulani, led to the closure of several other markets within the area. As new staple cereals such as millet and maize, as well as legumes, gradually reach rural markets, the prices of these staples are slightly declining relative to last year at the same time. However, staple food prices within the zone remain significantly higher than the prices in neighboring markets such as Gombe and Dawanau.

Although the level of displacement in the zone is well below that in greater Maiduguri, large concentrations of displaced households are found in urban areas, particularly in Potiskum and Damaturu. Humanitarian actors and government have intensified their efforts in providing support to affected populations in the northeast. The Federal and State Governments through NEMA, PINE, VSF and SEMA have been providing some food and non-food support to IDPs. Similarly, humanitarian organizations are also assisting IDPs with food, WASH, and non-food assistance. The current level of support, however, is not able to target all displaced families, particularly those residing outside of official camps.

Community assistance remains an important source of food and non-food support for displaced and rural, resident households.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for the October 2015 to March 2016 period is based on the following zone-level assumptions:

- This scenario is developed with the assumption Boko Haram conflict and related displacement will continue at current rates.

- Impacts of the continuing conflict on agriculture activities will lead to below-average main and off-season harvests.
- The generally good pastoral production and low demand for pastoral resources will lead to continued good availability of pastoral resources.
- Owing to the limited productivity in the zone and continued fears, agricultural labor work will remain restricted.
- Market activity will remain disrupted as conflict continues to affect trade flows and market closures. Traders will continue to evade the zone, particularly rural areas, through at least December.
- Market supplies will increase, though slightly, between October and December with the availability of new harvests.
- Although market prices will generally follow typical seasonal trends, given the continued disruption to market activity, staple food prices in the zone will remain higher than in neighboring areas.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Household food availability and access will increase slightly due to new harvests coming in between October and December. As the harvest production will once again be well below average, households are expected to smooth their consumption of own stocks in the expectation stocks will not carry them as far through the consumption year as usual. Rural, resident households in areas worst affected by conflict will continue to face gaps in meeting their basic food needs due to the limited harvest production and restricted market access. As off-season production is expected to be impacted in a similar manner to the main season, food availability is not expected to improve greatly between now and early 2016. As such **much of the zone will be continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity through March 2016. Households in the zone less directly impacted by conflict will still forgo essential non-food needs in an effort to meet their basic food needs and will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through March 2016.**

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table 1: Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Northeast Nigeria	Marked decrease in or end to conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved market and trade activities, increased trade flows • Improved dry season activities and increased food availability and access during March/April period • Increased income earning opportunities through petty trade and other non-farm activities and increased food access • Gradual return of IDPs home
	Increase in access for humanitarian agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved humanitarian condition in settlement areas • Increased food availability and access for beneficiaries

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](#).