



## GIEWS Country Brief Rwanda

Reference Date: 27-April-2017

### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Below-average precipitations at beginning of 2017B agricultural season**
- **Harvest of 2017A season affected in parts by below-average rainfall**
- **Maize prices at high levels due to tight national and regional supplies**
- **Generally good food security situation, with pockets of food insecurity in some eastern and southern districts**
- **Significant number of refugees from Burundi in need of humanitarian assistance**

### Below-average rains at beginning of 2017B season affecting crop establishment

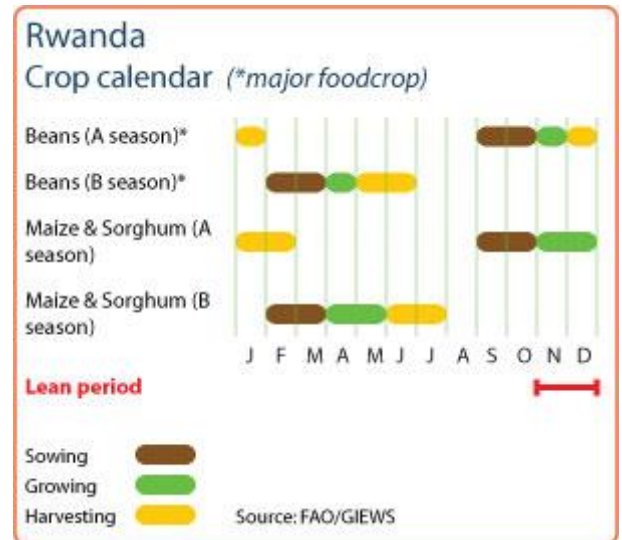
Planting of the 2017B season crops, to be harvested from May, was completed in March. Late and below-average rainfall so far had a negative impact on crop establishment and vegetation conditions. According to remote sensing analysis and information, rains had a timely onset in February, but the accumulated rainfall between February and the first dekad of April was about 20-30 percent below the long-term average over most cropping areas, with the most severe deficits observed in southeastern and northeastern districts. Rainfall amounts and distribution in the coming weeks will be crucial for crop performance and a close monitoring is warranted.

Armyworm infestations affecting early-planted crops have been reported in several cropping areas. The Rwanda Agriculture Board has estimated the affected area at about 15 700 hectares, which represents about 25 percent of the total area planted with maize and sorghum. Local authorities are undertaking appropriate control measures.

According to the latest Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum weather forecast, the March-May rains are likely to be average to above-average, which will ease the moisture deficits accumulated so far and improve vegetation conditions.

### Harvest of 2017A season affected in parts by below-average rainfall

Harvesting of the 2017A season crops was concluded in February. The October-January "short-rains" season was characterized by an early onset in mid-September and near-



**Rwanda**  
Cereal production

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 estimate	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	559	550	550	0
Sorghum	148	145	145	0
Rice (paddy)	86	97	111	14
Others	83	74	74	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>2</b>

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

normal rainfall amounts in October and November. However, the early cessation of the rains in mid-December affected the yields of late-planted crops. In addition, seasonal cumulative rainfall in western highlands bordering Lake Kivu and in eastern semi-arid agro-pastoral areas was up to 25 percent below the long-term average, resulting in a reduced output.

### Maize prices at high levels

In the capital, Kigali, despite the ongoing 2017A season harvest, wholesale prices of maize increased by 8 percent between January and March 2017 when it was traded at about RWF 400/kg, 35 percent more than 12 months earlier. The increase is mainly due to localized production shortfalls and reduced and highly-priced exports from neighbouring Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, where the supply situation is tight, which prevented an adequate replenishment of stocks. Sharper price increases were recorded in eastern areas where a below-average output was gathered. In Kirehe district, prices of maize increased by 12 percent over the same period. Prices of beans, after having declined by 17 percent in February, increased by 6 percent in March, when they were around their year-earlier levels.

### Food security conditions generally good

Food security conditions have improved since last December when the 2017A season crops started to be available for local consumption, ending the main lean season. Agricultural activities related to the cultivation of 2017B season crops are providing labour opportunities for poor households, improving their purchasing power and access to food. However, food security is deteriorating in some eastern and southern districts (Kayonza, Kirehe, Ngoma, and Bugesera), where households are facing IPC Phase 2: “Stressed” food insecurity levels as stocks have been depleted earlier than usual following the below-average 2017A production and households rely more on markets to meet their food requirements. In response, the Government conducted food assistance distributions (mainly maize and beans) in these areas to assist vulnerable households.

According to UNHCR, as of end-March, about 85 000 refugees from Burundi are hosted in Mahama (Kirehe district in the East) and Kigali camps, and their food security is essentially guaranteed by continued humanitarian assistance.

