

Food security deteriorates as the lean season starts

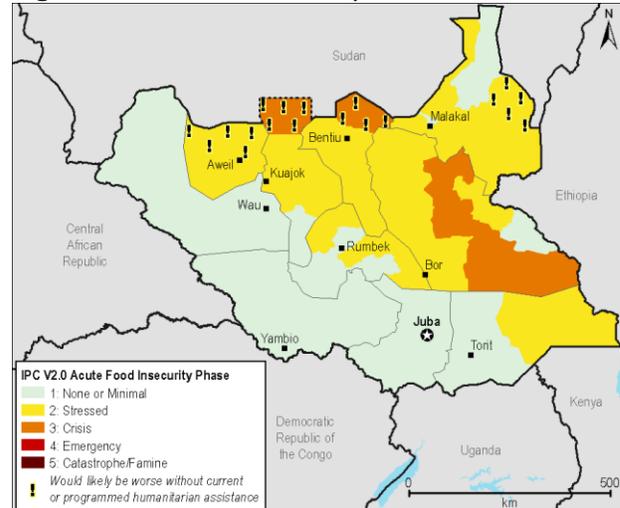
KEY MESSAGES

- Given the lean season’s earlier than normal start, high food prices and reduced livelihoods continue to limit poor households’ food access. In parts of Jonglei state, households are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity outcomes driven by insecurity, high prices and restricted access to wild foods and income sources such as collection and sale of firewood, charcoal and grass. In Unity, Warrap, and Lakes states, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity is expanding to counties previously Stressed (IPC Phase 2) due to fighting and insecurity.
- Although border tensions are expected to ease following the signing of the Implementation Matrix between South Sudan and Sudan on March 12th, 2013, areas affected by inter-ethnic fighting in Jonglei, Unity, Lakes, and Warrap states will continue to have limited access to humanitarian assistance and restricted livelihood activities until the end of the dry season when conflict will lessen.

CURRENT SITUATION

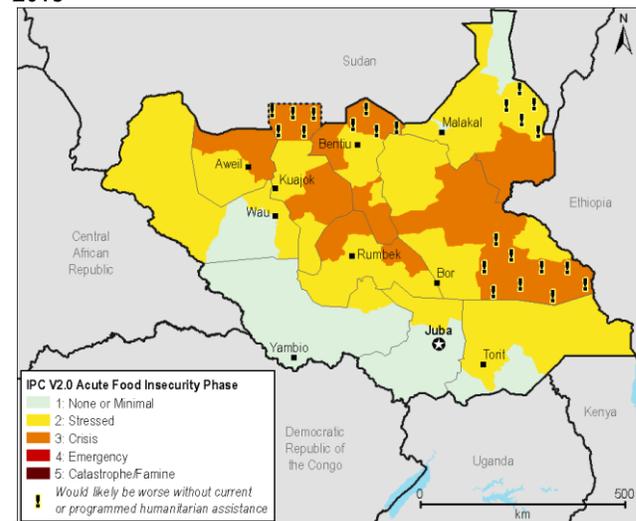
- Staple food prices:** In February 2013, staple food prices showed mixed trends with stable prices more frequently observed in greater Equatoria states, while high and more volatile prices were recorded in the northern states. The inflated increase in prices is attributed to the current macro-economic situation, high transaction costs, and the prevailing border tensions, which restrict the flow of informal trade from Sudan into the northern states. This resulted in reduced availability of white sorghum, normally imported from Sudan. In Juba and Aweil, white sorghum was not readily available, prompting maize prices to increase in Aweil (131 percent) from January to February. In Jonglei State, insecurity and high production deficits from the 2012 agriculture season are the main reasons for early price increases. In Bor, sorghum price increased by 15 percent in February compared to January and 33 percent compared to last year.

Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, March 2013.



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 2. Projected food security outcomes, April - June 2013



Source: FEWS NET

These maps represent acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. For more information on this scale, please visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale.

- **Security:** Insecurity created by internal and interstate cattle raiding continue as the dry season progresses. The situation in Pibor County of Jonglei State remained tense in March with clashes reported in Gumruk and Labaraab. Increased levels of insecurity prevented humanitarian access to populations affected by earlier violence in Boma and Gumuruk. On March 10, 2013, over 500 heads of cattle were raided from Twic County in Warrap state. A separate attack which took place in Gogrial East resulted in 23 deaths and 5 children missing, 1800 cattle looted and 254 killed. The total number of displaced resulting from cattle raiding stands at 12,433 as of March 10, 2013. In spite of the Implementation Matrix supporting the September 2012 agreement signed recently, tensions are still widespread along the Sudan/South Sudan border.

UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

Below are adjustments to assumptions outlined in the [January Outlook Report](#) through June 2013. If not noted otherwise, the assumptions noted in the January Outlook remain valid.

- **Border tension and internal conflicts:** Troops have been building along the Sudan and South Sudan border in recent months. The two countries signed a technical agreement on the establishment of a Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ) along the common border on March 8, 2013. The enforcement of this agreement is expected to improved security along the border, and over time encourage cross border movement including trade and labor migration. Increased cattle raids are expected to continue until end of the dry season, in line with seasonal trends. Insecurity due to cattle rustling will continue to displace and disrupt livelihoods and undermine the food security of the affected populations in Jonglei (Pibor, Nyirol, and Akobo counties), Lakes (Cueibet county), Unity (Mayom and Mayendit counties) and Warrap (Gogrial East, Tonj, and Twic counties) states.
- **Cooperation agreement:** The recently signed Matrix for the implementation of the cooperation agreement signed by South Sudan and Sudan in September 2012 is expected to stabilize security along the undetermined border, and subsequently resume oil production and reopen cross-border trade between the two countries. When further employed, this agreement will improve the economic situation of the country, stabilizing prices particularly in the states bordering Sudan, and re-establishing cross-border labor migration among households who normally migrate to Sudan for income and livelihood activities. If implemented according to the matrix, the cooperation agreement signed in September 2012 is expected to improve bilateral relations between the two countries and the economic situation.

PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH JUNE 2013

- Food prices are expected to increase following seasonal trends during the peak of the lean season. However, implementation of the new security arrangement at border areas and resumption of trade will improve food availability in South Sudan particularly in states bordering Sudan. In addition, prices will stabilize in those states and food access to poor households will improve. Better security along the border will also encourage cross-border labor migration, resulting in better access to income for poor households in border-states. Despite these improvements in these border areas, the situation in Abyei is likely to be tense in anticipation of the referendum, scheduled to take place in October 2013.
- Although border tensions are expected to decrease following the recently signed implementation matrix, cattle raiding will continue to exacerbate current food security conditions among poor households in Jonglei, Warrap, Unity, and Lakes states. Poor households particularly in Pibor, Uror, Ayod, Nyirol and Akobo counties of Jonglei state will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity from April to June. In Pibor in particular, the food insecurity situation will deteriorate further should continuous fighting and insecurity continue to impede humanitarian interventions in the area. Unlike border-states, food security in Jonglei state will be driven by insecurity due to cattle rustling, poor harvests from 2012, and high prices due to reduced trade flows.