

Border insecurity restricts traditional livestock migration

KEY MESSAGES

- Insecure conditions along the border have blocked seasonal migration of cattle owned by the Messeriya and Rezeighat tribes of South Kordofan and East Darfur into South Sudan, which could lead to increased livestock mortality.
- Discussions between Sudan and South Sudan in late January failed to bring progress toward implementing security and economic agreements, escalating the risk of insecurity in border areas, particularly in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.
- Due to the good 2012/13 harvest, Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity is foreseen through June 2013 for areas not affected by conflict. However, Stressed and Crisis (IPC Phases 2 and 3) acute food insecurity is likely to persist through at least June in conflict-affected areas of South Kordofan, Blue Nile, Abyei, and Darfur.

CURRENT SITUATION

- **Border conflict between Sudan and South Sudan puts cattle in Darfur and Kordofan at risk of mortality:** Due to the steady rise in insecurity and recent closures in border areas, millions of heads of cattle owned by the Rezeighat and Messeriya nomadic herders of East Darfur and South Kordofan states that were en route to North and West Bahr el Ghazal states in South Sudan have been stranded north of Bahr al-Arab River since mid-December. In South Darfur, about 37,500 Umbararo Falata cattle herders were forced to settle in 13 locations in Tulus and Dimso after they were expelled from South Sudan. A similar pattern of nomadic return from South Sudan is also evident in Sinar and Blue Nile states. Animals are now concentrated in areas with limited pasture and water, and competition for these resources is likely to increase. If seasonal migration routes to South Sudan are not available by March/April, increased animal mortality is likely.
- **Failure of Sudan and South Sudan to implement security and economic agreements heightens concern:** As a follow-on to agreements signed between the two countries in September 2012, January meetings anticipated action regarding issues of importance: cessation of support for rebel groups on both sides, establishment of a demilitarized zone along the border, resumption of South Sudan’s oil exports, and re-opening of animal grazing and trade routes. At present, procedures have not been put in place to facilitate or enforce these agreements. The failure to do so may further aggravate the already high risk of insecurity along border areas. For example, in February, approximately 70 trucks smuggling fuel and food items from Sudan to South Sudan

Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, February – March, 2013

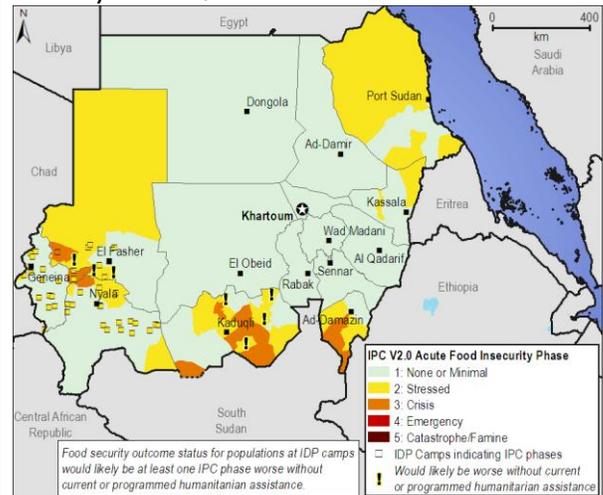
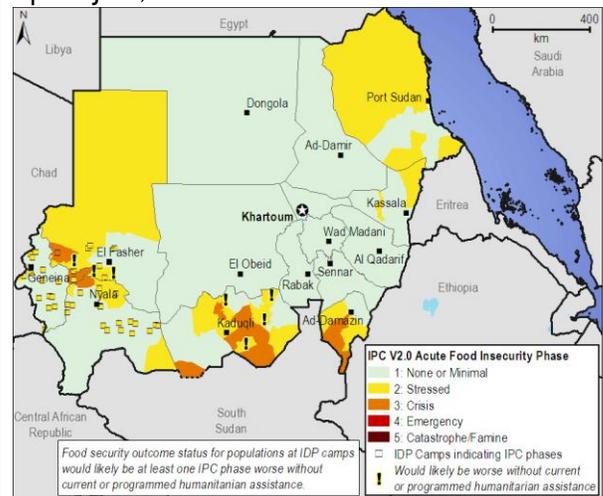


Figure 2. Projected food security outcomes, April – June, 2013



This map represents *acute* food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and does not necessarily reflect *chronic* food insecurity. For more information on this scale, please visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale.

were stopped in western South Kordofan state, indicating an increase in Sudan's border patrol efforts to curb informal trade flows to South Sudan.

- **Displacement grows from the continuing pattern of conflict between SAF and armed rebel groups in Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur:** Conflict between SAF and Darfur rebel groups in Darfur and between SAF and SPLM-N in South Kordofan and Blue Nile continues to cause new displacement, threaten lives and livelihoods, and reduce access by humanitarian agencies. Since January, the situation along the border between Sudan and South Sudan has become increasingly tense, with both countries accusing the other of building up troops along the border. The most recent fighting was reported in Jadid Abu Nuwara/Abu Ghebeiha in South Kordofan, and in Mafo/Kurmuk and Bout areas of Blue Nile. In Darfur, fighting between SAF and Darfur rebel groups (mainly the Sudanese Liberation Army Abdelwahid faction, or SLA-AW) has continued in East and West Jebel Mara and some parts of South Darfur state since December. Tribal fighting between Abala (camel herding populations) and Beni Hissein clans in Serief Bini Hissein locality of North Darfur continues. Humanitarian agencies are concerned about lack of access to affected populations in Serief locality.
- **Cereal prices have started increasing and will continue to increase through June:** Current prices remain above average for consumers, though low for producers due to high production costs this year. Sorghum prices are 107 percent above the five-year average, yet in January remained stable in some markets and increased slightly in others (9-15 percent higher) compared to last December. This is mainly due to increased demand by traders to build their market stocks, the continued formal exports to Gulf states, and informal exports to South Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia. The inflation rate in January 2013 remains high at 43.6 percent, higher than the 2012 average of 35.6 percent.
- **Desert locust and rat infestation destroy crops:** In February, a number of immature Desert locust swarms invaded winter cropping areas and fruit trees between Abu Hamad and Dongla, including Merwe and Ed Debba. More swarms are expected to migrate from winter propagation areas along the the Red Sea coast. A severe outbreak of rats in northwest Gadaref state destroyed up to 30 percent of crops. These rats will pose a high risk to the next cropping season that begins in June/July 2013.

UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The current situation has not affected the assumptions used to develop FEWS NET's most likely scenario for the period of February to June 2013. A full discussion of the scenario is available in the [January Outlook](#).

PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH JUNE 2013

- During February to June, the improved food security situation in relatively secure areas of Sudan (including some parts of Darfur) will be maintained due to improved food availability and access. Cereal prices will likely steadily increase during the latter part of the scenario period, but most households will continue to rely on food stocks and some market purchase. Most households will continue to have sufficient access to food, and face minimal acute food insecurity through the Outlook period. However, in conflict-affected areas of South Kordofan, Blue Nile, Darfur, and Abyei, Stressed and Crisis acute food insecurity will persist through at least June.
- In SPLM-N- controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, Crisis level of food insecurity are likely to persist at least through June among IDP populations, in addition to poor households of the host community, given the depleted stocks, high food prices, and limited capacity to access food from the market. The main drivers of food insecurity in these areas include persistent insecurity and sporadic fighting, reduced access to cultivation over the past two years, restricted population movement to seek labor, restricted access to trade and humanitarian assistance, and diminishing household assets. The bumper harvest might increase smuggling of grain from GoS-controlled areas to SPLM-N controlled areas and reduce prices, but purchasing power in these areas is severely curtailed. IDPs in SPLM-N-controlled areas are likely to see diminished availability of their primary food source (wild foods) as the dry season progresses. In GoS-controlled areas, Stressed levels will persist among IDPs due to better access to labor opportunities in urban areas and regular access to food aid provided by the GoS and the humanitarian community.
- In Darfur, the main areas of concern are the conflict-affected areas of Serief Benei Hissein, West and East Jebel Mara, and some parts of Tawila, Saraf Omra and Kebkabiya localities. In these areas, Crisis levels of food insecurity are likely to persist through at least June, due to impacts of insecurity, displacement, destruction of assets and crops, and reduced or lack of access by humanitarian agencies.