AUGUST 22, 2002 – ISSUE NO.4

GREATER HORN OF AFRICA (GHA) FOOD SECURITY BULLETIN

The mixed performance of the current rainfall season over the northern sector of the Greater Horn of Africa continues to cause concern in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan…

Summary

- The poor rainfall performance from March to July affected crop and pasture conditions raising food availability concerns in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The intensification of rainfall from the end of July over southeastern Eritrea and northern Ethiopia has eased the dryness and provided relief to the agricultural and pastoral communities but could pose flood risks in these countries due to saturated soils and swollen rivers.

- Current sorghum growing conditions in western areas of Sudan and Ethiopia are satisfactory, but planting in parts of South Sudan has been delayed due to late onset of the season. Elsewhere in GHA countries crops are maturing or being harvested thus improving food security.

- Despite localized occurrences of groups of instar hoppers in Hargeisa, Somalia in July, no desert locusts outbreaks were reported in other GHA countries monitored by the Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO.EA). The forecast to the end of August indicates a likelihood occurrence of low level of Desert Locust populations in suitable habitats of Somalia; and areas in Sudan that receive summer rains. Other countries are expected to remain free of desert locusts during the forecast period.

- Maize prices rose in July in GHA markets. This is partly attributed to increased exports to Southern Africa countries.

- The El Niño updates indicate a 90 percent probability of occurrence durning 2002 and early 2003.

Poor rainfall performance in the northern sector of the GHA – The performance of the main *(Meher)* rainfall season (June – September) has been characterized by late onset poor temporal distribution (reflected by poor vegetation conditions in Figure 1) in agriculturally productive regions of Ethiopia (Wello and Tigray), Bieh, Leech and Ruweng States of Southern Sudan and parts of southern Eritrea.

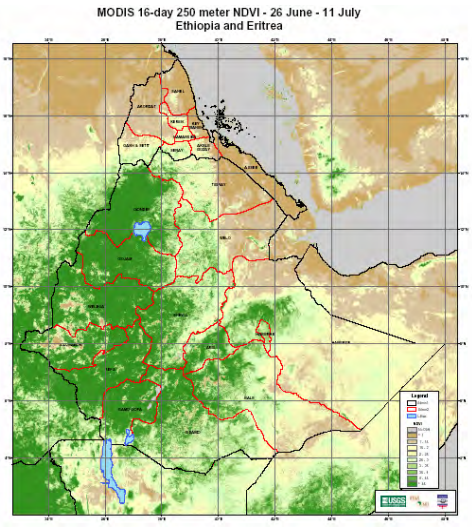
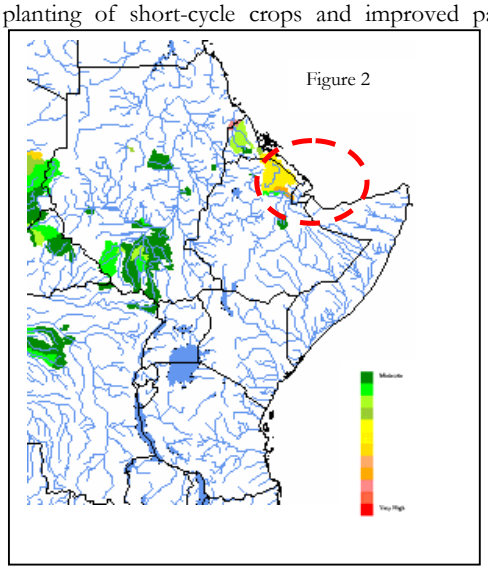


Figure 1: Vegetation Conditions – Source: USGS

In Ethiopia, the prolonged drier than normal conditions prompted the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), and United Nations Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UN-EUE) to conduct a joint assessment mission in July to determine its impact on food security. The mission findings confirmed that the dry spells during the 2002 *belg* (March – May), which extended to June and July affected crop and pasture conditions in Afar, Tigary and Wello Regions causing food security crises.

The rains received towards end of July and early August have eased the dryness, facilitated planting of short-cycle crops and improved pasture and water supplies. The rains are expected to intensify in August and continue in September. However, an early cessation could cause rapid deterioration of crop and pasture conditions leading to large losses across much of the northern sector of the GHA.



Source: USGS

Potential flooding over Ethiopia and Eritrea – The intensification of the seasonal rains over parts of southeastern Eritrea and northern Ethiopia has resulted into saturated soils and swollen rivers increasing the risk of flooding (see area circled in red in Figure 2). This situation could be further aggravated by weather forecasts that suggest heavy rainfall (75 – 150mm) to continue during the upcoming dekad.

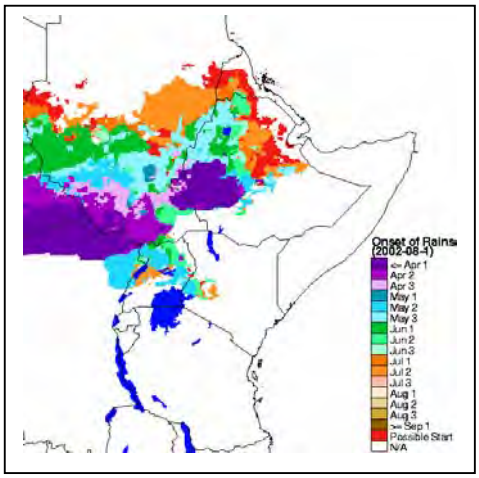
This monthly Regional Food Security Bulletin is a collaborative initiative of the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS/GLCRSP), Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). It is funded by USAID and other collaborators.

Regional Overview – Factors Affecting Food Availability and Access

Agroclimatic Conditions

The June to September seasonal rainfall in the northern GHA countries has generally been characterized by a late onset and with below normal amounts particularly in June and early July. Figure 3, shows the most probable dates for the start of the seasons. According to Figure 3, even in August, there are still areas within the extreme southeastern Sudan and parts of eastern Ethiopia where the rains are not yet fully established.

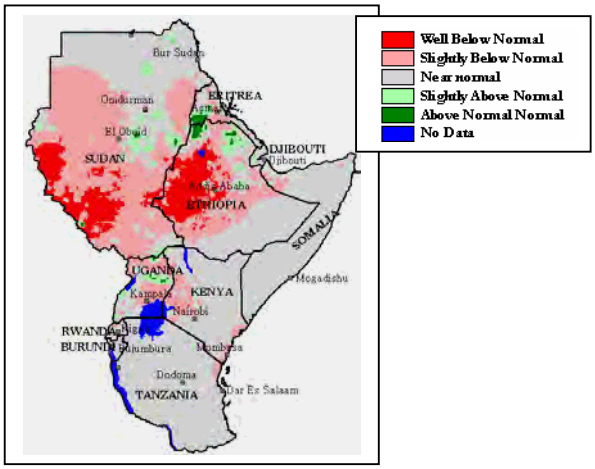
Figure 3: Start of the Season – August 1-10, 2002



Source: USGS/EROS Data Center

The overall rainfall performance has been very erratic with insufficient amounts over the predominantly pastoral areas in the eastern sectors of Sudan and Ethiopia; but heavy rains over some of the agricultural productive areas of Ethiopia have been observed. The cumulative rainfall anomalies for the first dekad of August 2002 in Figure 4, shows the worst hit (rainfall deficits) areas to be almost the entire eastern sector of Southern Sudan and western and central highlands of Ethiopia (shaded in red).

Figure 4: Rainfall Estimate for August 1-10, 2002

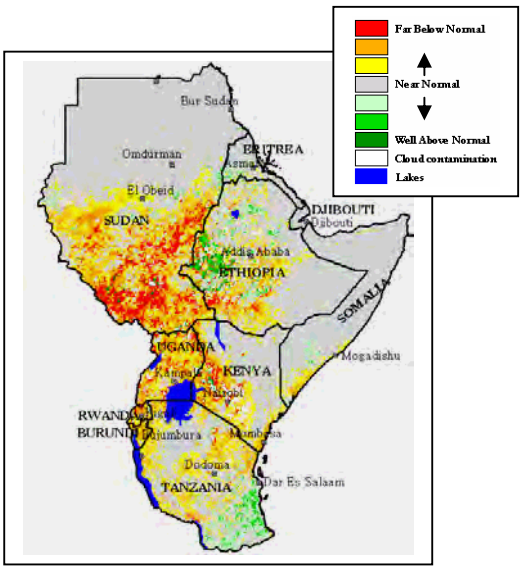


Source: USGS/EROS Data Center

However, it is important to note that the central Ethiopian highlands are climatologically high rainfall areas, which have over the recent past dekads received adequate rainfall to sustain agricultural production. Satellite imagery—confirmed by field reports—indicate that there have been instances of abnormally heavy rains with potential flood risks, especially over northern Ethiopia and southwestern Eritrea. If the rains continue to intensify during August (normally the peak month), they could cause crop damage particularly on the water catchments areas and down stream areas in these countries.

The vegetation conditions have improved over areas of Tigray and Wello Regions of Ethiopia following the on-going rains, which began end of July. However, the overall situation appears to be below normal for this time of the year particularly in southern Sudan, southwestern Ethiopia, western and central Kenya, northern Tanzania and all of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. Field reports have confirmed the current satellite based vegetation observations in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Vegetation Anomalies – August 1-10, 2002

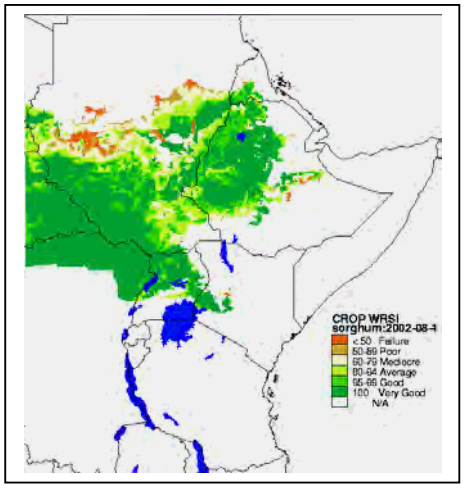


Source: USGS/EROS Data Center

Crop and Livestock Conditions

The current sorghum growing conditions—based on the crop-specific WRSI product—are promising in western Sudan and Ethiopia (Figure 6). However, the extended outlook for this period until the end of the season indicates the possibility of average to mediocre crop performance. Possibilities of a total crop failure could occur over parts of the eastern Ethiopia and central Sudan if current rains stop uncharacteristically. The prognosis for the crop is based on the assumption that the weather conditions will remain within the climatological norms and the season will end normally. The overall rainfall performance during this peak period will be a major determinant for agricultural and livestock production.

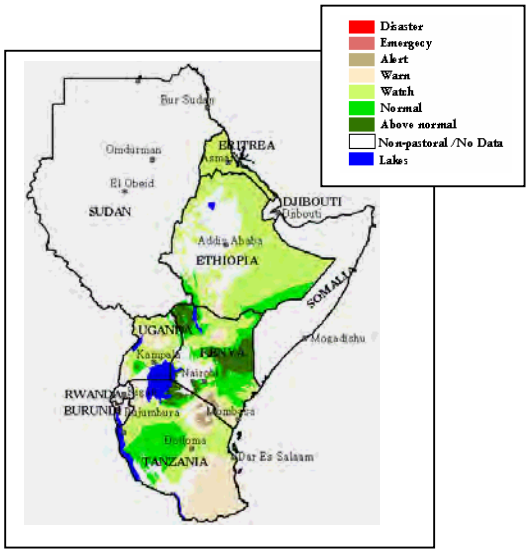
Figure 6: Current Sorghum Conditions – August 1-10, 2002



Source: USGS/EROS Data Center

The current pasture conditions based on the Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS) products indicate good vegetation for much of the GHA countries covered by the product (Figure 7). Problems are south-central Kenya (parts of southern Oromiya bordering the Moyale Districts), and northern Tanzania. Field assessment reports by the Arid Lands and Resources Management Project (ALRMP) and other government agencies in Kenya, have confirmed the LEWS observations. Also, the report highlighted localized poor vegetation conditions over some of the pastoral districts in Kenya (Turkana, Mandera, West Pokot and Kajiado) and marginal districts of Taita-Taveta, Kwale, Kitui and Makueni) due to prolonged dry spells.

Figure 7: Forage Map Showing Percent Deviation from Long-Term Mean– August 1-10, 2002



Source: USGS/EROS Data Center

Note: the LEWS products do not cover Somali and Sudan.

Crop Pests

Source: Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO.EA)

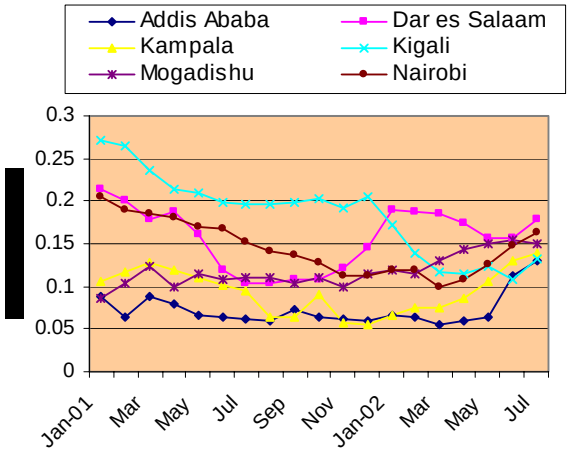
Reports of conditions of locusts and other migratory pests in July and forecast for August 2002 indicate that the fourth instar hoppers were observed in groups in the nursery of the Ministry of Agriculture compound in Hargeisa, Somalia, but no desert locusts were reported in July in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The forecast of conditions through the end of August indicates a likelihood occurrence of low level occupancy of desert locust populations in suitable areas of Sudan that receive summer rains(especially in parts of north Kordofan and Darfur) and in suitable habitats in parts of the highlands and Wadis leading to the northwestern coastal areas of Somalia. Other countries—namely Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda—are expected to remain free of desert locusts during the forecast period.

Reports on other migratory pests indicate that control operations of the red-billed quelea birds (Quelea quelea) now damaging paddy, wheat, barley, sorghum and teff fields continued effectively in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. No other pests were reported in the region. For details refer to: dlc@telecom.net.et or delco@insightkenya.com

Market Conditions

Despite increased food supplies in markets from ongoing harvests, maize prices rose in July in most markets compared with the previous two months. The increase in price could in part, be attributed to increased exports to Southern African countries (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Wholesale Maize Prices in Selected Markets in GHA Countries



Source of Data: Market Information Systems: Ethiopia, Uganda, Somalia, Tanzania, Rwanda and Kenya

Food Security Conditions by Country – GHA Countries

Eritrea

The amount of food stocks held by the World Food Programme (WFP) at the end of June in warehouses of the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) stood at 35,709 metric tons (MT), sufficient to meet food needs for 2.5 months at normal distribution rates. Food amounting to nearly 9,400 MT is currently in the pipeline. The countrywide drier than normal conditions in June and July delayed the onset of the *Kremt* season and planting of the main season short-cycle cereal crops, and have drastically reduced grazing and browsing. Unless, the rains continue through September, the harvest could be adversely reduced, if not fail. The delayed onset of rainfall in Makel Zone could affect production of the long-cycle crops as they have already delayed planting and could reduce acreage under crop. The voluntary repatriation of refugees from Sudan is continuing, bringing the number of returnees in Eritrea since May 2001 to more than 50,000 subsequently increased demands for relief food.

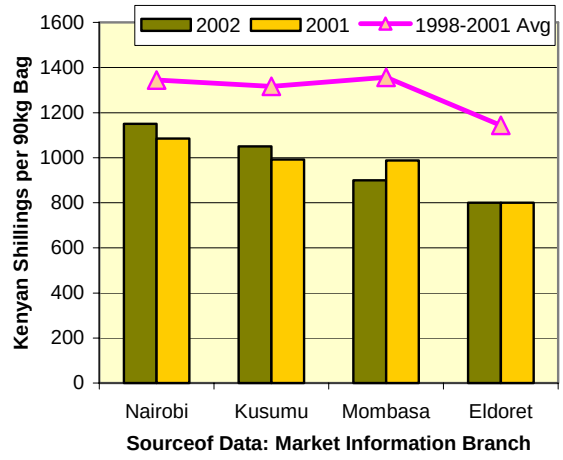
Ethiopia

The impact of the poor performance of the 2002 minor (*belg)* March-May season rainfall on food security in Ethiopia include a mediocre maize harvest in southern Ethiopia, severe shortage of pasture and water in eastern and northeastern pastoral areas (Afar Region, East Shewa Zone in Oromia Region and Shinile and Fik Zones in Somali Region). In the drought-prone eastern lowlands of Amhara and Tigray Regions in the north of the country, particularly in mid and low altitude crop dependent areas, the poor *belg* rains have constrained cultivation of long-cycle crops such as maize, sorghum and millet that account for a major part of annual food grain production in these areas. As a result, farmers shifted from planting high yielding long-cycle crops to low yielding short-cycle crops such as teff and short-maturing varieties of maize and sorghum. However, due to the delay of the main (*meher)* rainfall, the shift to short-cycle crops has also not been very successful in many areas. The onset of *meher* June-September season has been late by as much as one month in many crop dependent areas, particularly in mid and low altitude areas in the eastern half of the country. Although the *meher* season rainfall has improved since the third dekad of July (21-31), a decline in harvests from the long-cycle crops and shortage of pasture and water early next year are likely in the eastern lowlands of Amhara and Tigray Regions unless the rains continue through the end of September. This would give farmers an opportunity to plant late-season crops such as teff and pulses (chickpeas and vetch) and would improve pasture and water sources.

Kenya

Assessments organized by Kenya Food Security Meeting conducted and July has confirmed improved food security conditions in several pastoral districts following favorable rainfall in July. In these districts, milk availability has increased, herd sizes are beginning to grow, livestock body conditions have improved and prices of livestock have increased in the pastoral markets as pastoralists embark on rebuilding herds. The number of beneficiaries on the WFP Emergency Operation (EMOP) for drought-affected people is expected to be reduced in response to improved food security conditions. Food aid distribution will be confined to areas of Marsabit, Mandera, Tana River, Ijara and West Pokot Districts where heightened food insecurity is likely following a poor 2002 long-rains season, although they had an initial recovery of herds from the fair 2001/02 short rains received in late 2001. Favorable food security conditions have also been reported in the early harvesting districts of the country following a fair performance of rains. Although rains resumed in late July, their poor performance is likely to cause food deficits in areas of the Rift Valley (the grain-basket), Eastern, Central and Coast Provinces. However, these shortages are unlikely to cause increases of food prices in the short-run as food supplies have increased in most markets, with the beginning of harvesting in July thus keeping current maize prices lower than 1998-2001 averages (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Maize Prices in Reference Markets



Sourceof Data: Market Information Branch

Rwanda

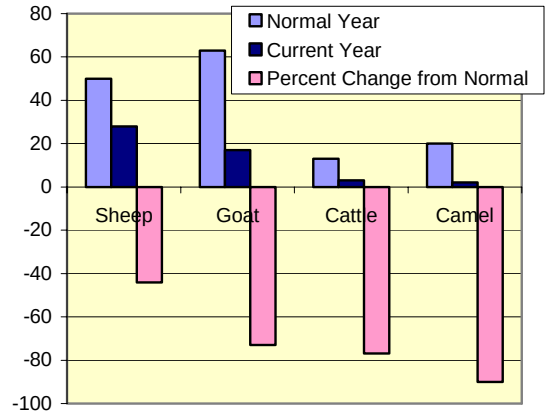
The final joint crop assessment report concluded that the food security situation in most provinces in the country will be satisfactory up to the end of the year. However, according to key informants in the provinces, about 150,000 to 200,000 people (or 2 percent of the national population) in localized areas of 12 districts in the high altitude zones could be food insecure in October/November due to reduced production of sorghum and beans following poor rainfall in May. Available coping strategies may not be sufficient to meet their food needs before the next harvest in December/January. Therefore, humanitarian assistance will be necessary, particularly for poor households. The extent and duration of this assistance will depend on the rainfall pattern for the next season in October/November. The estimated 17,000 people evacuated in late May from the Gishwati Forest in northwest Rwanda are still living in makeshift camps and prospects of relocating them to permanent resettlements in time

for cultivation in the coming season are poor, as the agreement between the government of Rwanda and humanitarian organizations on the choice of the permanent resettlement sites is taking longer than expected. The evacuated population, now on food aid from the government, is highly vulnerable to food insecurity and could be more vulnerable in the near future as they will miss the next cropping season and could be exposed to rains without adequate shelter.

Somalia

The three consecutive years of below normal rainfall in northern Somalia, specifically the potential rangelands of Sool Plateau, have deteriorated pasture and water conditions, rendering them insufficient and less supportive for the full recovery of livestock from the impact of the drought. This is particularly true for big ruminants – camel and cattle. Calving rates of sheep, goats, cattle and camels have dropped by 44%, 73%, 77% and 90%, respectively, in the current year compared to a normal year (Figure 10) thus causing a significant decline in the reproduction and the building of herds; and in the supply of milk as well as meat. Despite the decline in livestock reproduction, the continuing import ban of livestock from Somalia to the Gulf States has caused an oversupply of animals to markets. This continues to depress prices resulting in unfavorable terms of trade for pastoralists. Clan fighting, which erupted in July in central and southern Somalia (Baidoa), has disrupted the movement of people and commodities between Baidoa–the main food producing area—and Gedo and Mogadishu, consequently reducing market supplies and pushing food prices up in Mogadishu between June and July. If the clan fighting extends to the neighbouring sorghum-producing belt during this critical stage of crop harvest, it could further hamper harvests and have a negative impact on food security throughout Somalia.

Figure 10: Calving Percentages in Sool Plateau: Current versus Normal Year

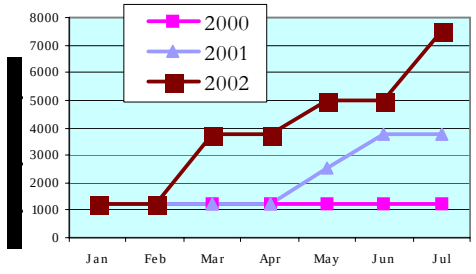


Source of Data: Food Security Assessment Unit (FSAU), Nairobi

Sudan

Food security in the Western Equatoria Region has improved with the ongoing harvest of the first season crop, from which a surplus production is expected. Planting for the second season crops should begin during August, but will depend on the performance of rainfall. In Bahr El Gazal and the Lakes Regions, crops planted in June and July are performing well and are at the vegetative stages. However, prolonged below normal rainfall in Jonglei and Upper Nile Regions caused a need to replant in July but the activity was limited by inadequate availability of seeds. Livestock conditions have improved due to adequate supply of pasture and water. Investigations of a threat of Rinderpest outbreak reported in parts of eastern Equatoria in July found that it was possibly a tick bone disease. Food security could worsen in the Lakes Region (Rumbek, Tonj and Yirol) due to increased demand for food following the arrival of displaced households from the western Upper Nile Region. Although the total figure of displaced persons has not been confirmed, an estimated 6,000-7,000 people have arrived in the Tonj area alone. Prices of sorghum have sharply increased since March, with those in July being the highest since 2000 (Figure 11). These prices are expected to decrease when maize and groundnuts mature by end of August. A review of food aid stocks available for interventions for July to December 2002 period indicated that WFP, the main food aid agency, has stocks lasting only through the month of August, which could affect the poputation in the Upper Nile and Jonglei areas that are currently reporting cases of malnutrition, partly caused by shortage and distribution of food aid. However, the food pipeline is expected to improve with the harvesting in September – October this year.

Fugire 11: Prices of Sorghum in Rumbek Market



Source of Data: WFP/TSU

Tanzania

The ongoing harvest has improved food availability in the country. Contrary to previous years where new harvests and supplies to markets depressed prices, the trend this year indicate rising prices attributed to diverting maize and beans, in particular from the Southern Highlands to the food deficit Southern Africa countries, instead of the major domestic market in the country. Food deficits in the southern neighboring countries have attracted a large number of traders in southern Tanzania and it is believed that producers are getting good prices from the sales. Despite the erratic and inadequate rainfall during the 2001/02 rainy seasons, and the current normally dry conditions during July, availability of water, pasture and browse for livestock were favorable in most pastoral areas in Tanzania providing pastoralists with satisfactory food security.

Uganda

Supplies of food crops to markets in the country are good and prices of commodities other than maize are comparatively lower than for the same period last year. Export opportunities to new southern African markets in 2002 by a consortium of Uganda grain traders, coupled with demand to meet local consumption, have led to increasing maize prices since May compared to the same period last year. Drier than normal conditions in the Uganda's eastern and northeastern districts since May could reduce millet and sorghum harvest prospects to about 60 percent of normal. Also, the maize crop in the major growing areas of eastern and western Uganda was affected by moisture stress during grain-filling stages, and could result in losses of up to 40 percent of normal production. The below normal rainfall has limited livestock access to water and pasture in the pastoral areas. In southwestern Uganda, livestock migration to Lake Mburo National Park has been reported. A security ban on livestock movement in Karamoja Region limits pastoralists movement there, which could increase the risk to food insecurity among these groups. Civil insecurity in northern and parts of northeastern Uganda reduced households' access to some fields to cultivate this season, resulting in reduced area planted. This may lead to reduced crop production. Although no serious food shortages have been reported, close monitoring of food security conditions in these regions will be necessary.

Climate Outlook - El Niño Alert

According to one of the leading international research institutes, IRI, there is a high – 90 percent likelihood of an El Niño event occurrence for the remainder of 2002 and continuing into early 2003. However, the forecast observes that the surface temperatures (SST) in the tropical Pacific Ocean are significantly less (cooler) than those associated with the 1997/98 El Niño. Consequently, the climate impacts are anticipated to be weaker but could be substantial in some regions. For details, refer to: http://iri.Ideo.columbia.edu.

Humanitarian Activities – Stocks as of July 31, 2002

World Food Progamme, Kampala

Country	Population affected and cause	Estimated food aid needs	Pledges to date	Pipeline and deliveries	Remarks
Burundi	Under the regional protracted relief and recovery operation, WFP assists 551,358 internally displaced persons.	102,191 MT needed from August 2001 – January 2003.	Only 40 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 5,927 MT. Almost two months stock available in the region and 11,766 MT are expected.	There are insufficient resources to maintain the cereals and pulses pipeline beyond October 2002.
Djibouti	Emergency operation assists 95,000 drought victims. Since January 1999, parts of Djibouti have received less than 50 percent of normal rainfall.	Total requirements of 13,216 MT from August 2001 – October 2002.	82 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 1,624 MT. Only 1,951 MT are in stock, and 3,135 MT are expected.	Additional resources for 1,393 MT of pulses and 194 M of Corn-Soya-Blend (CSB) are required immediately.
Eritrea	For nearly three consecutive years, the arid and semi-arid northern Red Sea and Anseba Regions have experienced serious drought conditions. This year the early rains failed and the onset of the main rains was delayed. Beneficiaries are projected to increase to 227,174 by December 2002.	Estimated needs for the period between May and December 2002 are 90,869 MT.	71 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 2,484 MT. Stock of 5,315 MT in-country and 8,539 MT expected.	Resources are sufficient to meet requirements until the end of the year except for a shortfall of Corn-Soya-Blend (CSB) starting in November.
Ethiopia	WFP assists 2,072,680 small-scale farmers and drought-affected persons. Ethiopia experienced a severe drought crisis in 1999 -2000. The failed March-May rains this year have caused increased food insecurity, particularly in the Afar Region.	Requirements are 117,430 MT from April 2002 - March 2003.	64 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 13,399 MT. Stock of 724 MT is in country, and an additional 129,346MT are expected.	The operation will experience a shortfall of 4,124 MT of oil over the next 5 months.
Kenya	Emergency operation to assist 1,264,624 drought affected persons. The drought started mid 1999.	Requirements are 77,696 MT from April 2002 – October 2002.	Only 18 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 10,348 MT. Stock of 21,691 MT in country and 9,988MT are expected.	The food security in parts of the country could worsen in the coming months as a result of below normal March-May long-season rains.
Sudan	Emergency operation to assist 2.9 million war and drought affected persons. Sudan has experienced recurrent drought over the last 10 years and continued armed conflicts.	160,806 MT required for the period April 2002 to March 2003.	68 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 7,894 MT over the next five months.	The operation will experience supply gaps in October and November.
Somalia	Food aid for relief and recovery for 700,000 direct and 620,000 indirect beneficiaries.	Requirements are 63,204 MT from July 1999 – December 2002.	80 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 1,694 MT. Stock of 3,572 MT in country and 11,448MT are expected.	Resources are sufficient to maintain the pipeline until the end of the year.
Uganda	Protracted relief and recovery operation caters for 572,000 internally displaced persons; 319,000 children receiving school feeding and 223,724 drought-affected persons in addition to refugees, social support and food for assets operations. Late and erratic rainfall in 2000 in northeastern Uganda resulted in crop failure and reduced food availability followed by insufficient rains for a second successive year.	Requirements are 35,605 MT for internally displaced; 19,171 MT for schoolchildren, and 600 MT for drought-affected. Protracted relief and recovery operation will run from April 2002 to March 2005.	Only 12 percent resourced	Average monthly requirement of 9,562 MT. Stocks of 10,874 MT in-country and 5103 MT are expected.	Requirements from July have risen due to the increase in displaced persons resulting from intensified armed conflict in the North. Additional contributions are required to sustain the pipeline beyond September.

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