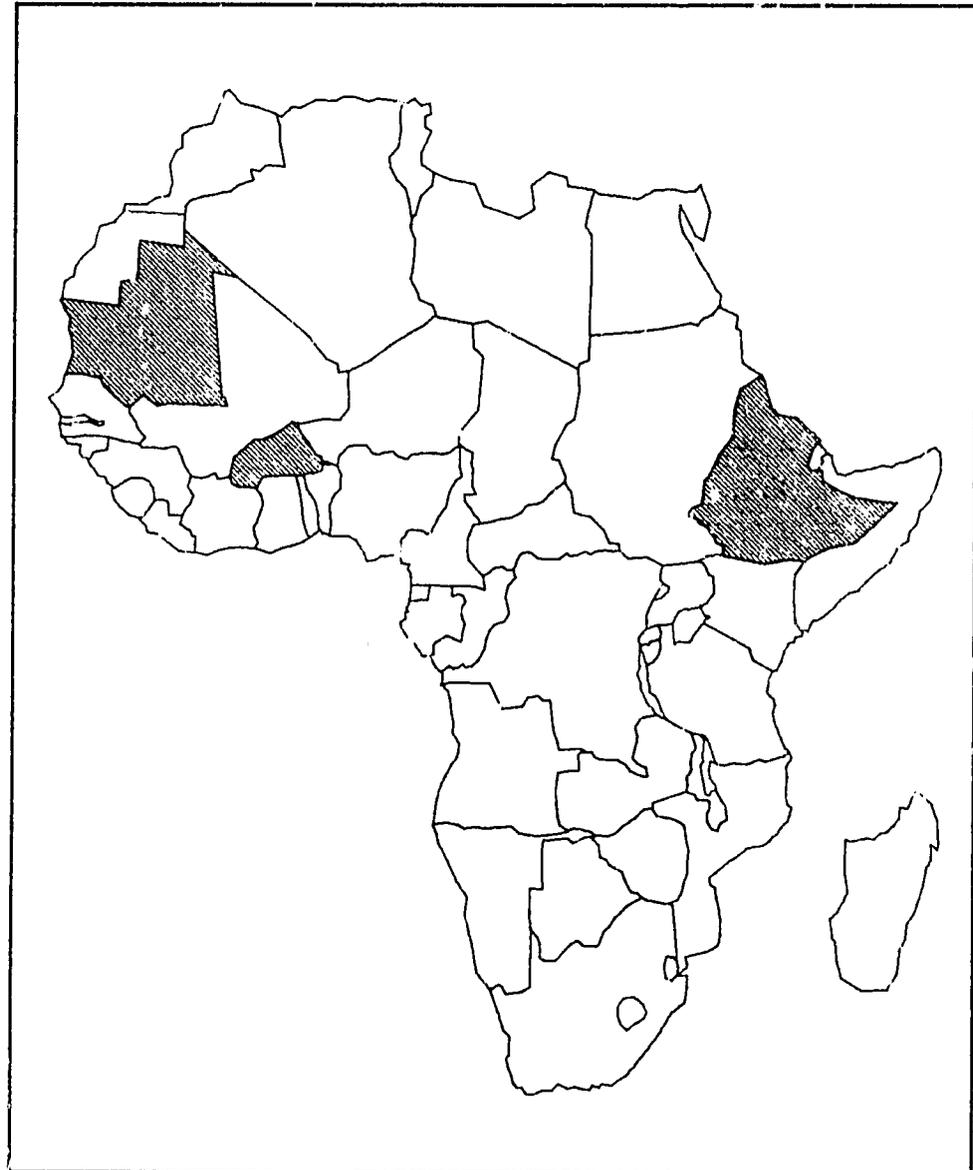


Report 22
May 1988

FEWS Country Report BURKINA, ETHIOPIA and MAURITANIA



Famine Early Warning System
Africa Bureau
U.S. Agency for International Development

Contents/List of Figures

	Page
Overview	1
Burkina: Concern Over Food Supplies	
Map 1: Summary Map	2
Ethiopia: Situation Worsens	
Map 1: Summary Map	4
Mauritania: New Harvest Assessment	
Map 1: Summary Map	6
Table 1: 1988 National Cereal Balance Estimates	8
Table 2: 1987 Cereal Harvest by Region	9
Map 2: Areas of Potential Pastureland	10
Table 3: Stock and Aid Distribution Plan	11
Table 4: Food Needs Met	11
Table 5: Areas With Potential for Food Shortages	12

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BURKINA, ETHIOPIA and MAURITANIA

Report 22, May 1988



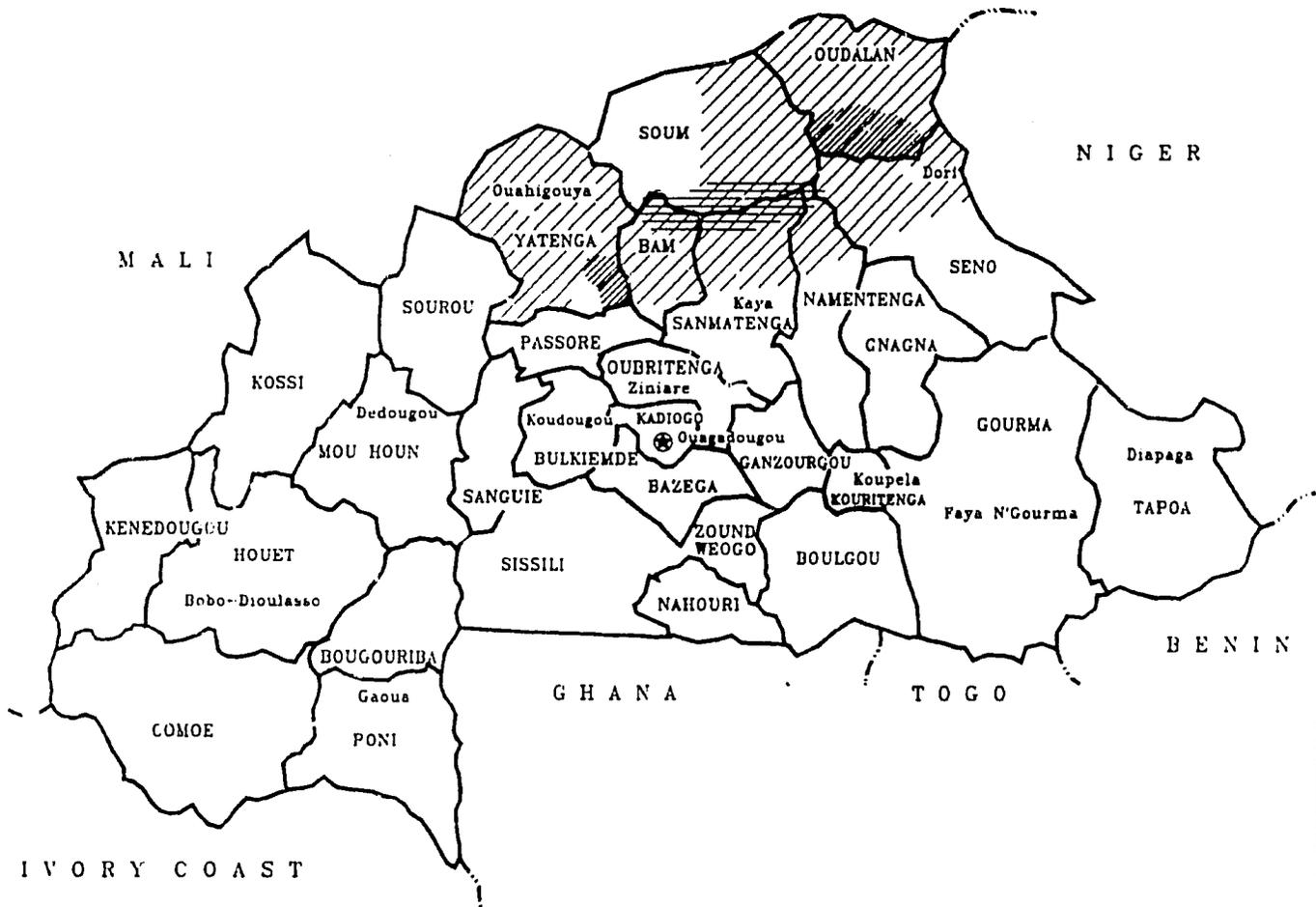
Prepared for the
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Overview

The government of *Burkina* is concerned over food supplies in the northern provinces. The price of millet has been rising since the 1987 harvest and is considered high throughout the country. There appears to be little marketable grain in Burkina. The situation in northern *Ethiopia* has worsened with increased military action and disruption of relief activities. The recent *Mauritanian* harvest assessment shows the 1987 cereal crop to be better than last year's, which was itself a record crop. The increase hides intense, localized crop failures in the central Regions. Food aid is being distributed in areas of need.

Burkina Faso



★	National Capital
◎	Regional Capitals
- - - - -	International Boundaries
— — — — —	National & Regional Boundaries
▨▨▨▨▨	Immediate food shortage likely due to extremely poor harvest and limited resources
▧▧▧▧▧	Poor harvests and localized crop failure due to drought
▬▬▬▬▬	Pasturage poor and water sources drying up

0 25 50 75 Miles

0 50 100 Kilometers

BURKINA

Concern Over Food Supplies



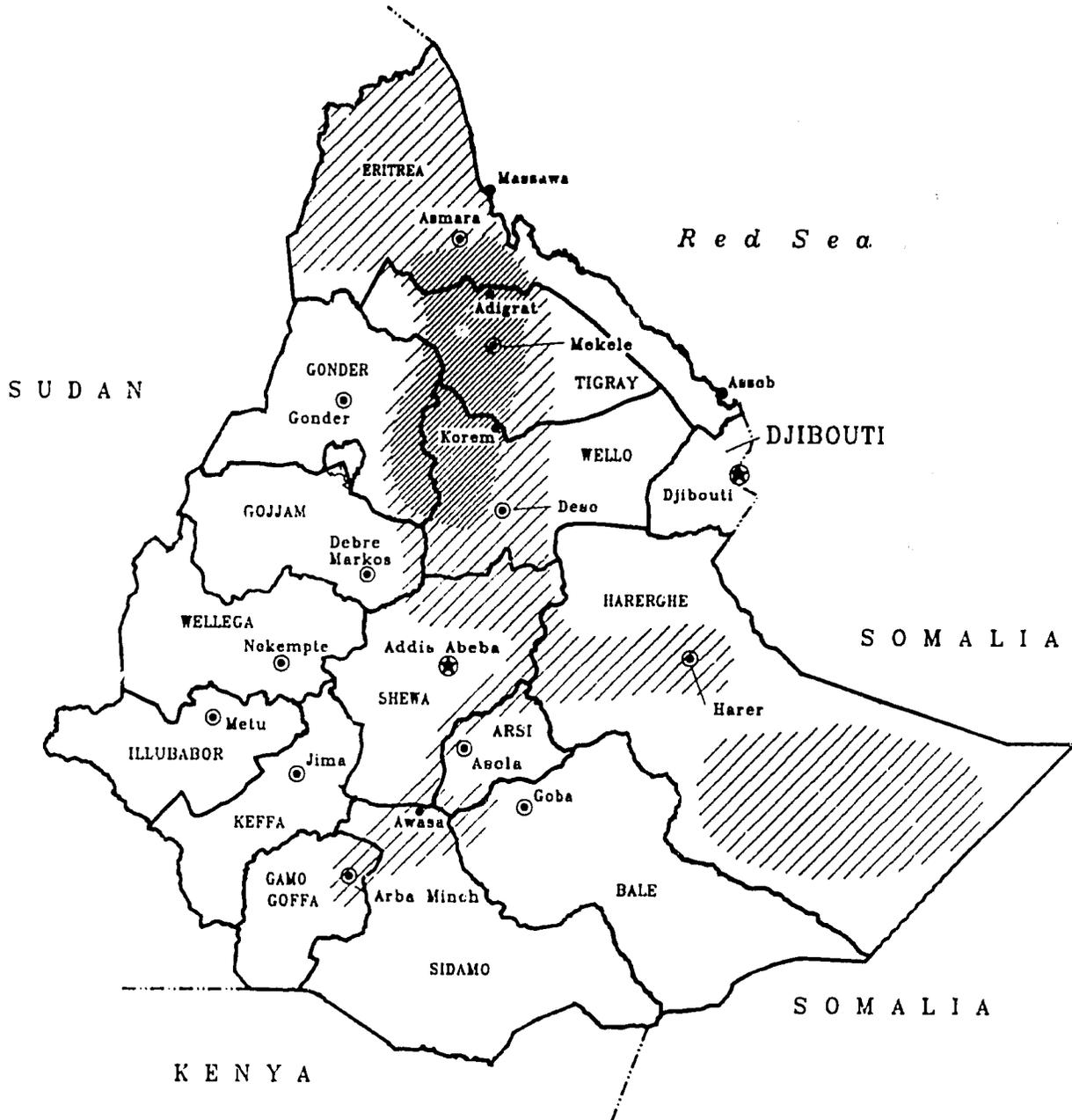
Summary

The government of Burkina (GOB) is concerned over food supplies in the northern provinces, where local 1987 grain production is estimated to meet only 54% of food requirements. National Cereal Marketing Board (OFNACER) stocks of millet, the preferred grain, are running low in some northern provinces. The price of millet in the north has been rising since the 1987 harvest and grain prices are considered high throughout the country. Indeed, there appears to be little marketable grain in Burkina. OFNACER reports it was unable to purchase more than 5% of the 30,000 metric tons (MT) set as its objective for the first trimester of 1988.

OFNACER now estimates that by June 1988 it will have a 30,000 MT deficit in its commercial stocks. While the GOB does have 35,000 MT of security stocks, it appears reluctant to use them to offset the commercial stock deficit.

OFNACER has requested that donors provide 16,000 MT of direct food aid as well as assist in purchasing 14,000 MT of grain from neighboring countries. Donors have encouraged the GOB to use its security stocks to lower grain prices and relieve the present shortage.

Ethiopia



	National Capital
	Regional Capitals
	International Boundaries
	National & Regional Boundaries
	Immediate and serious food shortages
	Food shortages late in 1988

0 50 100 150 Miles
0 50 100 150 Kilometers

FEWS/PWA, May 1988

ETHIOPIA

Situation Worsens



Summary

The situation in northern Ethiopia has worsened. The expulsion of foreign relief workers and increased military activity in northern Ethiopia have restricted relief activities and the flow of information. Non-combatants in Eritrea and Tigray will be at greater physical risk from warfare. They are also at greater risk of a catastrophic interruption to their normal food production cycle, already disturbed by drought. The greatest risk is to those already dependent on emergency food aid supplies:

Belg season crops (harvested in June) will probably not recover from the lengthy March dry spell in those areas where these crops are most important. In contrast to trends established during good Belg seasons, satellite images show a continuing decline of vegetation in the Belg areas of southern Tigray, Wello and northeastern Shewa regions. This trend is particularly disturbing since the Belg season normally supplies 50% of production in these areas, which already require emergency food aid.

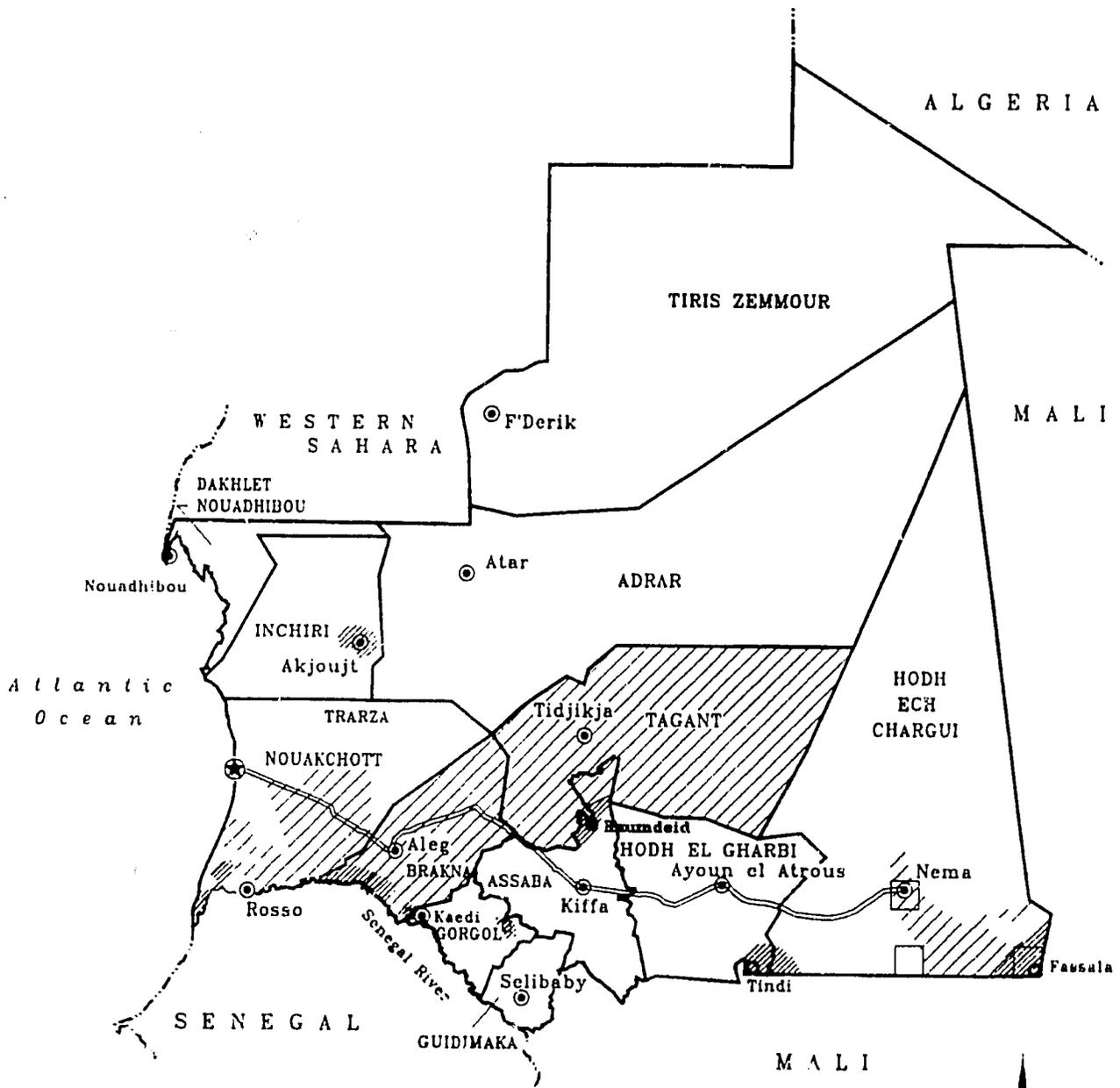
Rainfall has apparently resumed in adequate volume for the production of maize and sorghum (harvested in early Fall) by the peasant sector. Land preparation, planting and germination of long-growing maize and sorghum all begin toward the end of the Belg season.

Donors continue to expect refugee movement into Sudan from Eritrea and Tigray. As yet, however, no major movements have occurred. Plans are in place to assist some refugee arrivals in Sudan. If truly massive movements occur, however, they would severely tax the ability of the Sudanese government to provide a haven.

Increasing numbers of Sudanese refugees in western Ethiopia (fleeing warfare in the Southern Region of Sudan) will tax United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) relief abilities. Reports express greatest concern over the condition of up to 45,000 young boys who arrived emaciated and dying, and without guardians.

Donors are once again concerned about the increasing congestion of port facilities. Food aid flows must compete for space with normal cargos. Donors have pledged and delivered food aid at rates beyond the capacity of ports or distributors. Nonetheless, potential emergency requirements are so vast that donors are loath to reschedule pledges or deliveries.

Mauritania



⊕	National Capital	0 50 100 150 Miles 0 50 100 150 Kilometers
⊙	Regional Capital	
●	Department Seat	
---	International Boundaries	
—	National & Regional Boundaries	
—	Road	
□	Malian Touaregs have sought aid	
▨	Vulnerable areas	
▩	Areas of highest vulnerability	



MAURITANIA

New Harvest Assessment



Summary

Mauritania's 1987 cereal harvest will meet at least 40% of the country's total food requirements, according to the recent Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania's (GIRM) harvest estimate. Irrigated crop production along the lower reaches of the Senegal River and rainfed crop production in the southeast are greatly increased over the 1986 harvest. The increase in irrigated and rainfed production hides a sharp decline in flood recessional and lowland recessional production¹. The assessment of which areas show signs of food supply disruption remains unchanged since FEWS Country Report 21. Altogether, about 276,300 people live in the problem areas, including an estimated 14,160 Touaregs (primarily from Mali) who migrated to southeastern Mauritania in search of assistance. The GIRM Food Security Commission (CSA) and the donors have agreed to a ceiling of 20,000 metric tons (MT) for free distributions in 1988. Some donors worry that the CSA's use of free distribution stocks for the new Food-for-Work program will cause free distribution stocks for the year to fall well below that mark.

Cereal Balance

The new 1987 net production estimate of 128,430 MT, recently released by the GIRM Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), is 10% greater than Mauritania's record 1986 cereal production. Table 1 combines the new production figure with recent food aid import data to update the national cereal balance estimate (published in FEWS Country Report 18). Two different consumption rates are used to show the range of possible balances. There should be enough cereal stock in Mauritania over the course of the year to meet total consumption needs, but the stock is not evenly distributed geographically and much of the stock carried over from 1987 is in poor condition.

The large 1987 harvest is due to solid increases in rainfed and irrigated production over previous years, although some of the difference can be attributed to the continued strengthening of the MRD Agricultural Statistics Service (SSA). At the same time, the new harvest assessment verifies the suspected sharp decline during 1987 in flood recessional cereal production along the Senegal River and highlights a 46% decrease in lowland recessional production from the 1986 harvest. The drop in lowland recessional crops especially affects people in Assaba, Brakna, and Tagant Regions. While people in these areas have herding to fall back on, the near lack of rain during 1987 also severely limited pasturage there.

¹ In flood recessional agriculture, crops are planted in soil left moist by receding river levels. Lowland recessional agriculture takes advantage of rainwater and water tables increased by nearby rains that are trapped in low-lying depressions.

Table 1: National Cereal Balance Estimates for 1988

	"Programming" Consumption Rate	"Status Quo" Consumption Rate
Net Cereal Production ¹	128,430 MT	128,430 MT
Hold-Over Stock from 1987 ^{2, 3}	98,000 MT	98,000 MT
Food Aid Imported through March 1988 ³	24,500 MT	24,500 MT
Food Aid in Pipeline ³	44,770 MT	44,770 MT
Expected SONIMEX Imports ²	53,700 MT	53,700 MT
Expected Commercial Imports ²	40,000 MT	40,000 MT
Total Supply Estimate	389,400 MT	389,400 MT
1988 Population ⁴	1,877,000	1,877,000
Annual per Capita Cereal Consumption Rate ⁵	165 kg	123 kg
Projected Consumption	309,700 MT	230,900 MT
Cereal Balance Estimate	79,700 MT	158,500 MT
% Consumption Met by Total Supply	125.7%	168.6%
Proposed Stock Reconstitution Plan⁶		
On-Farm	10,000 MT	10,000 MT
Commercial Security (CSA)	6,000 MT	6,000 MT
Other (SONIMEX)	21,900 MT	21,900 MT
Total Proposed by CSA	28,000 MT	28,000 MT
Balance If Stocks Reconstituted	13,800 MT	92,600 MT

Source: FEWS; GIRM/MRD; GIRM/CSA; USAID; WFP

¹ Net Production: 124,430 metric tons (MT) is the Spring 1988 GIRM/MRD estimate for 1987-88 net production, and presumes a loss to milling, seed, feed, and waste of 40% for rice and 15% for all other grains.

² Non-aid hold-over stock and expected SONIMEX and Commercial imports are November 1987 GIRM/CSA figures.

³ Figures for food aid stocks, imports, and pipeline are from World Food Program (WFP) and USAID/Mauritania Food for Peace Office figures of varying vintage.

⁴ 1988 Population: 1,877,000 equals the 1987 population estimate used by USAID/Mauritania inflated by 2.7%. The GIRM is using a 1988 population figure of 2,000,000. With a population of 2,000,000, the projected consumption becomes 330,000 MT and 246,000 MT at the 165 kg and 123 kg consumption rates, respectively; the estimated cereal balances become 59,400 MT and 143,400 MT, respectively; and the balances if stocks are reconstituted becomes -6,500 MT and 77,500 MT, respectively.

⁵ Consumption Rates: 123 kg/yr/capita was calculated from 1986 population and consumption figures; 165 kg/yr/capita is the consumption rate used by the GIRM, FAO, and other donor organizations when programming food aid.

⁶ The plan for reconstitution of stocks was proposed by the GIRM/CSA in November 1987.

The geographical distribution of agricultural systems in Mauritania is sufficiently clear to allow a rough Regional allocation of cereal production. Table 2 shows the marked increases and decreases in Regional production over the 1986-87 growing season. Such large interannual changes in production make it difficult for individuals to anticipate how best to use available resources to produce food or the income with which to purchase food.

Table 2: 1987 Cereal Harvest by Region

Region	Gross 1987 Total	Net 1987 Total	% Change From 1986
Adrar	-	-	-
Assaba	1,480	1,260	-83%
Brakna	650	550	-95%
Dakhlet Nouadhibou			
Gorgol	24,180	20,550	-48%
Guidimaka	18,120	12,010	70%
Hodh ech Chargui	62,750	52,930	138%
Hodh el Gharbi	24,140	20,520	128%
Inchiri	-	-	-
Nouakchott	-	-	-
Tagant	610	520	-86%
Tiris Zemmour	-	-	-
Trarza	31,370	20,090	43%
Total	163,302	128,430	10%

Source: MRD/SSA, Spring 1988 harvest assessment; FEWS/Mauritania

Food Security

As of the end of March, the CSA had at least 56,400 MT of cereals in warehouses throughout the country (Table 3). CSA stocks are used for sales, Food-for-Work and free distribution programs. The CSA has distributed 4,900 MT of "free distribution" and Food-for-Work cereals to needy areas since November 1987, and plans to distribute 3,620 MT of free cereals to 72,400 beneficiaries in the near future. When combined with local production, the stocks and recently distributed aid increase the percentage of food needs met at the Region level (Table 4). Even when including public stocks, however, less than 20% of food needs in Adrar, Assaba, Brakna, Tagant and Tiris Zemmour Regions will be met through local cereals.

Farming is not the primary means of food production in most of these areas. Livestock and local market stocks are important food sources as well, but quantitative information concerning these resources are not available.

A new, national Food-for-Work (FFW) program was started in 1988, administered by the CSA. The CSA has so far distributed 3,377 MT of FFW cereals, some of which were originally set aside for free

distributions. Some donors worry that continued use of "free distribution" stocks for FFW will leave the CSA short of the necessary tonnage for free distribution later in the year.

There has been no change over the past month in the identification of areas with potential food supply problems. The new harvest figures corroborate previous reports of difficulties in Tagant and Brakna Regions. As detailed in Table 5, a total of 276,290 people live in areas that FEWS/Mauritania determined to lack full food security. It is not yet clear just what percentage of the population in these areas is actually at risk of a food shortfall. About 26,000 people live in the areas currently identified as having the highest potential for food shortages.

February/March Rain and Potential Pastureland

Satellite imagery from mid-March suggested the presence of vegetation over a much broader area than was seen during any March from 1981 through 1986. The imagery is interpreted as possibly showing vegetation because of unusual rains in late February and early March. While the areas of possible pastureland have shrunk from those noted in March, they still cover a wide area of southwestern and south-central Mauritania (Map 2). Ground reports are still required to be sure that the imagery actually indicates grassland.

Map 2: Areas of Potential Pastureland

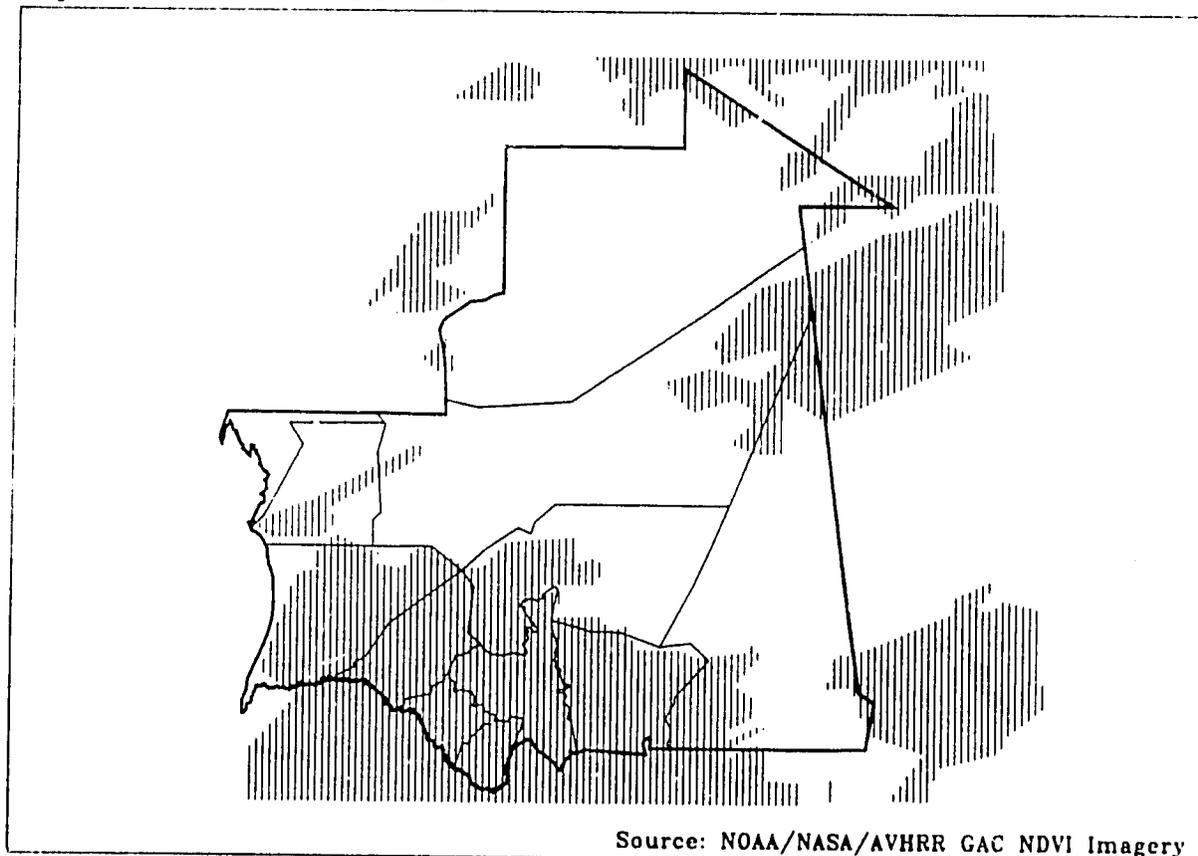


Table 3: Stock and Aid Distribution Plan

Region	CSA Stock Apr 88 ¹ (MTs)	Aid Dist Nov87-Mar88 (MTs)	Apr 88 Free Aid Plan (CSA) (MTs)	Total Aid & Local Stock (MTs)
Adrar	885	206	-	1,092
Assaba	2,073	129	150	2,352
Brakna	1,912	634	1,100	3,645
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	1,450	172	-	1,622
Gorgol	662	43	-	705
Guidimaka	882	65	-	947
Hodh ech Chargui	2,298	392	430	3,119
Hodh el Gharbi	1,709	441	-	2,151
Inchiri	299	-	180	479
Nouakchott	41,815	1,689	-	43,504
Tagant	229	163	930	1,322
Tiris Zemmour	290	86	-	376
Trarza	1,908	883	830	3,621
Total	56,414	4,901	3,620	64,935

Source: FEWS/Mauritania; GIRM/CSA; USAID

¹ The April 1988 CSA stock equals the results of the December stock audit less Food-for-Work and free food distributed during January through March 1988.

Table 4: Needs Met by Cereal Production, Public Cereal Stocks, and Programmed Food Aid

Region	1988 Pop	% Needs Met @ 165 Avg kg/cap/yr	% Needs Met @ 123 Avg kg/cap/yr
Adrar	84,350	8.5	11.4
Assaba	205,930	10.0	13.4
Brakna	187,840	13.1	17.5
Dakhlet Nouadhibou	31,340	38.2	51.3
Gorgol	135,780	86.9	116.5
Guidimaka	64,170	140.5	188.5
Hodh ech Chargui	230,210	126.8	170.1
Hodh el Gharbi	156,050	75.7	101.5
Inchiri	14,010	31.6	42.4
Nouakchott	353,520	70.1	94.1
Tagant	119,710	9.1	12.2
Tiris Zemmour	21,600	12.8	17.2
Trarza	272,620	79.4	106.5
Total	1,877,130	62.4	83.7

Source: Tables 2 and 3; FEWS Report 18, Table A2 (December 1987)

Table 5: Populations in Areas with Potential for Food Shortages

Regions/Groups	Reason for Assessment	Population in Affected Areas¹
Riverine Population	Lack of recessional agriculture in 1987	60,000 people
CRS Program Children	Closing of the CRS Maternal and Child Health Program in November, 1987	10,000 children under five years of age
Hodh el Chargui Region, Tindi Area	1987 grasshopper infestation causing 100% crop loss	2,346 people
Inchiri Region, Akjoujt Town	Child malnutrition rates increasing since late 1985; closing of national copper mine	11,290 people
Hodh ech Chargui Region, Touareg Population in Southeast	Requesting assistance, appear to have no resources	2,832 families 14,160 people
Gorgol Region, M'Bout Department	Flooding of agricultural land in 1987	1,000 people
Hodh ech Chargui Region, Fassala Area	Lack of rainfall, agricultural production in 1987	4,000 people
Central Mauritania, Tagant Region northern Brakna Region	Lack of rainfall, agricultural production, pasture in 1987	116,560 people 50,537 people
Assaba Region, Boumdeid Department	Loss of wadi recessional agriculture in 1987	6,397 people
TOTAL		276,290 people

Source: FEWS/Mauritania based on reports from CSA-run joint assessment missions and a University of Arizona/USDA/USAID/AGRES II Project study in the Senegal River Valley.

¹ The actual percentage of the population that is at risk of a food shortage is not yet clear for most of these areas.

Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) Country Reports

FEWS publishes monthly reports on Burkina, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, and Sudan. These reports are designed to provide decisionmakers with current information and analysis on existing and potential nutrition emergency situations. Each situation identified is described in terms of geographical extent and the number of people involved, and the proximate causes insofar as they have been discerned.

It is necessary to identify or "target" populations in-need or "at risk" in order to determine appropriate forms and levels of intervention. FEWS reports will employ the term "at risk" to mean...

...those persons lacking sufficient food, or resources to acquire sufficient food, to avert a nutritional crisis (i.e., a progressive deterioration in their health or nutritional condition below the status quo), and who, as a result, require specific intervention to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Perhaps of greatest importance to decisionmakers, the process underlying the deteriorating situation is highlighted by the FEWS effort, hopefully with enough specificity and forewarning to permit alternative intervention strategies to be examined and implemented. Food assistance strategies are key to famine avoidance. However, other types of intervention can be of major importance both in the short term and in the long run, including medical, transport, storage, changes in economic development policy, etc.

Where possible, food needs estimates are included in the FEWS reports. It is important to understand, however, that no direct relation exists between numbers of persons at risk and the quantity of food assistance needed. This is because famines are the culmination of slow-onset disaster processes which can be complex in the extreme. The food needs of individual populations at risk depend upon when in the disaster process identification is made and the extent of its cumulative impact on the individuals concerned. Further, the amount of food assistance required, whether from internal or external sources, depends upon a host of considerations. Thus the food needs estimates presented periodically in FEWS reports *should not* be interpreted to mean food aid needs, e.g., as under PL480 or other donor programs.