

SOUTH SUDAN Food Security Outlook

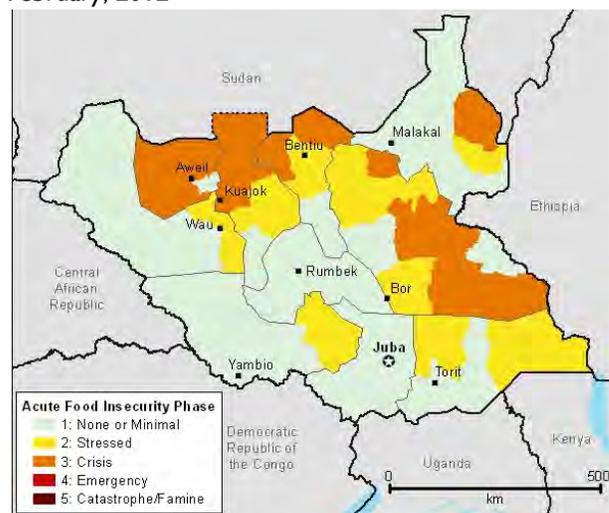
February to June 2012

Significant pockets of Crisis levels of food insecurity; earlier than normal lean season expected

Key messages

- Food insecurity in South Sudan is driven by below-average 2011 harvests; the impacts of conflict, particularly in Jonglei State; increased demand for food and services due to the growing IDP, returnee, and refugee populations; drastically reduced sorghum flows from Sudan; and well above average cereal prices. An early start to the lean season is expected in February/March instead of May/June.
- Key areas of concern include parts of Jonglei, Upper Nile, Warrap, Northern Bahr El Gazal states, and northern parts of Unity State, where food insecurity is likely to deteriorate during the scenario period (February to June 2012), and continue through the peak rainy season months of July and August. FEWS NET estimates that the size of the food insecure population will increase to 2.5 – 3 million people.
- Reduced trade with Sudan and below-average 2011 harvests continue to have a negative impact on staple sorghum prices. Prices remained high even during the harvest season (October – December) followed by further increases in January in select markets. The increases are likely to be sustained through September 2012.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security outcomes, February, 2012



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Reference Table, please see: www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale

Seasonal Calendar



Source: FEWS NET

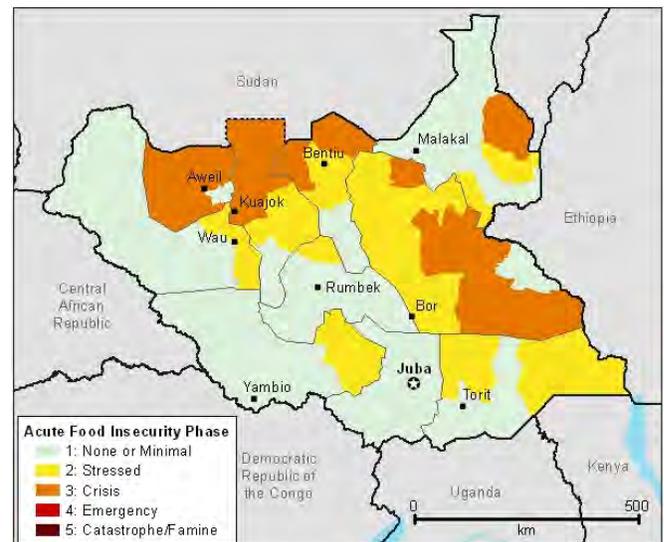
General food security conditions and key assumptions underlying the February – June 2012 most-likely scenario

In general, February – June food insecurity conditions are likely to range between Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels, particularly for the northern sector of South Sudan. However, the southwestern part commonly referred to as the Greenbelt, is expected to experience minimal food insecurity. **Minimal food insecurity is defined as a situation in which households do not experience short-term instability and are able to meet basic food needs without negative coping strategies. Stressed food insecurity is defined as a situation in which households experience short-term instability, and food consumption is reduced, but households do not engage in irreversible coping strategies. Crisis food insecurity is defined as households experiencing short-term instability that results in losses of assets and/or significant food consumption deficits.**

The key assumptions underlying the February – June 2012 Outlook are the following:

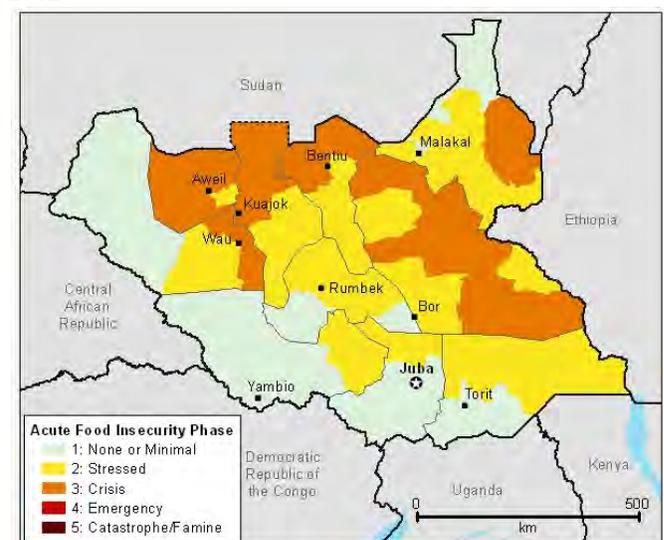
- There will be below-normal dry season long distance movements for grazing, fishing and exchange as well as below-normal access to wild foods (desert dates), particularly in central parts of Jonglei, due to high levels of insecurity from December to February.
- Short-term security improvements will occur due to increased troops that have been posted to conduct disarmament of the entire Jonglei population, as well as launching of various peace initiatives to campaign for peace and facilitate continued humanitarian interventions.
- Trade flows from Sudan are expected to remain restricted, with reduced flows of the key staple food, sorghum, from Sudan into South Sudan, sustaining above-average prices. In response to the reduced flows from Sudan, imports from Uganda and Ethiopia are expected to continue to increase, though they are unlikely to compensate for the volumes that were typically imported from Sudan.
- Recently completed and ongoing peace initiatives between Sudan nomads and their South Sudanese hosts along the Sudan – South Sudan border will sustain normal migration and peaceful coexistence during the remaining parts of this year’s dry season migration (February – May/June), at least in most areas along the border. This assumption applies to all states along the Sudan - South Sudan border except Upper Nile, where there have been some tensions between nomadic herders and the local populations.
- A significant proportion of the population displaced from Abyei, South Kordofan and South Blue Nile will remain displaced in Warrap, Unity and Upper Nile states, respectively.

Figure 2. Most likely food security outcomes, March-April, 2012



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 3. Most likely food security outcomes, May-June, 2012



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Reference Table, please see: www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale

Overall, key areas of concern are **Jonglei State** counties of Akobo East, Akobo West, Wuror, DukFadiet, Pibor, KhorFulus and Fangak; **Unity State** counties of Mayom, Abiemnom, and Pariang; **Upper Nile State** counties of Maban and Longuchok; **Warrap State** counties of Twic, Gogrial East, and Gogrial West; and **Northern Bahr El Gazal State** counties of Aweil East, Aweil West, Aweil North, and Aweil Center. Food insecurity in these areas remains driven by below-average harvests, insecurity, population displacements as well as disruption of dry season food access activities, and increased market-dependent populations comprising returnees and refugees from Sudan. Market flows for grain remain restricted as an extension of last year's trade restrictions and also possibly due to last year's below-average sorghum harvests in Sudan. This is confirmed by informal updates from Aweil North County on trucks starting to arrive in normal numbers loaded with many commodities but not sorghum. The negative impact of reduced or lack of sorghum flows is expected to become severe during March through August 2012, as on and off-farm food production sources become increasingly depleted.

Overall, FEWS NET estimates that 2.5 – 3 million people will be food insecure during 2012. This figure could increase further if Sudan effects the April 2012 deadline for all South Sudanese to return to South Sudan following July 2011 independence. Over 700,000 South Sudanese are still living in Sudan, and about 107,000 people willing to return to South Sudan are registered in and around Khartoum. Return of 700,000 people before the deadline is highly unlikely and logistically impossible given that only 365,000 people have returned since October 2010. Returns this year are expected to be increasingly more difficult due to insecurity in South Kordofan, the poor transportation system to the south and infrastructure within South Sudan, and the recent ban of returns by barge down the Nile from Sudan to South Sudan, the main mode of transport for people returning to South Sudan. The Government of Sudan put the ban in place due to suspicions that the barges were being used to ferry troops southwards. The IOM has asked for a year's extension to the deadline and for Khartoum and Juba to put in place procedures to allow people to stay in the north.

Below are details on key areas of concern, and how these areas are likely to be affected during February – June 2012.

Most Likely Food Security Scenario (February – June 2012)

Eastern Flood Plain Zone areas of Akobo East, Akobo West, Wuror, DukPayuel, DukFadiet, Twic East, Pibor, Khorfulus, and Fangak counties

Food insecurity conditions are at Crisis levels due to heightened intertribal, cattle-raiding conflicts between Murle, Nuer and Dinka communities during most of 2011, particularly in April, June, and August. The August raids displaced over 27,000 people, especially in Wuror County (representing about 15 percent of the total population in the county), and prevented them from tending their crops. In addition, most of the locations were affected by erratic rains and a prolonged dry spell from June – August, which negatively affected crop performance and caused significantly below-average harvests. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)/FAO 2011 CFSAM findings, Jonglei State is projected to face a 98,000 MT cereal shortfall in 2012, nearly twice the four-year (2007-2010) average shortfall of 54,000 MT.

These negative events were then followed by a wave of conflict starting in the last week of December 2011 and continuing into mid-February this year. This conflict has so far affected over 140,000 people in terms of displacement, loss of already below-normal crop harvest stocks, loss of livestock (the main livelihood assets), destruction of homes and basic infrastructural services such as health clinics and water points, and disruption of long distance dry season livestock grazing movements and fishing that often peak at this time. Affected populations are concentrated in the areas of Lekongole, Gumuruk, Boma, Labarab, Dengjok, Walgak, Waat, Yuai, Nyirol, DukFadiet, DukPayuel and Twic East.

The affected population is estimated to be at Crisis levels, as they are experiencing short-term instability that results in losses of assets, significant food consumption deficits due to loss of food stocks and livestock and likely significant reductions to desert date wild food access. In the absence of on-going emergency humanitarian interventions, these households would be at Emergency levels (IPC Phase 4), as they would face extreme food consumption gaps and extreme loss of livelihood assets. Inter-agency multi-sectoral interventions that started in mid-January are ongoing in all affected areas, especially in locations where the displaced are concentrated, though extremely poor road infrastructure are making access difficult and delivery of aid expensive. The interventions include provision of food and emergency health supplies, shelter as well as repairing water points.

There is also continued presence of armed youth who are main perpetrators of raids, increased division between youth, politicians, church and traditional leaders, all in the face of previously failed disarmaments and numerous broken one-off

peace agreements. These challenges are daunting and require a comprehensive long-term focus as well as continuous presence and engagement of key facilitators such as the government, Church and other peace building institutions with communities on the ground in terms of increasing reconciliation efforts with a strong focus on youth, and implementing development incentives such as improving infrastructure in the region.

Typically, key food sources at this time of year are a combination of desert dates, fish, livestock products and sorghum. Bartering of livestock for sorghum or maize is also common among grazing households that travel to graze along the Sobat River and the river area residents. Insecurity has significantly disrupted these activities. During this period, at least 50 percent of the population (half of each household) travels long distances to graze cattle and fish, to exchange livestock for grain in areas of Ayod and along the Sobat River, where long term sorghum and maize as well as recession crop harvests are common during the dry season. Productive female adults tend to remain behind during this period to source kinship support and collect wild foods, such as desert dates and gum Arabic that would be consumed during cultivation season. Given the scale of insecurity this year, it is highly unlikely that affected households will employ any of these responses to typical levels due to fear of attacks as they move or temporarily settle in these areas. The most affected sources of food will be desert date gathering, long distant fishing and grazing as well as exchange/barter. Kinship, an important coping strategy that contributes up to 30 percent of the annual food basket, is also likely to be affected as there are too many affected households for the community to support.

Projected food security outcomes for March-June are significant food consumption gaps due to loss of key dry season food access opportunities, as some of the food gathered or exchanged in the dry season is stored for consumption during April-July. However, it is important to note that the food gaps have the potential to become extreme should humanitarian interventions become interrupted during March – June. These food consumption gaps have serious implications for the health and nutrition of children under five, especially in the dry season (January – April) when hygiene and poor care related child malnutrition tends to peak and is typically exacerbated by dry season water shortages. These negative impacts are expected to affect households by geographical location other than social economic groups because the insecurity events are non-selective of status. However, the biggest losers in terms of livelihood assets are those that have large livestock numbers (wealthy) and have lost cattle, whose impact will be extended to poor households that rely on them for support. The above projected food security outcomes for March-June are based on the following assumptions:

- There will be below normal dry season long distance movements for grazing and fishing as well as below normal access to desert dates wild foods particularly in central parts of Jonglei, due to December – February insecurity.
- Short-term security improvements will occur due to increased troops that have been posted to conduct disarmament of the Jonglei population; these security improvements will facilitate continued humanitarian interventions as well as launching of various peace initiatives to campaign for peace.

While these improvements are conducive to the displaced returning home, it is uncertain whether most of the displaced will do so, given that previous disarmament activities have not had been effective in mitigating conflict in the long-term, though some short-term improvements in the conflict situation are expected. Already, there are reports that some of the Murle community members have started moving away from their homes towards Eastern Equatoria State, possibly to escape the disarmament.

Upper Nile State – Maban and Longuchock counties

Crisis food security conditions in Upper Nile's Maban County are due to continued arrival of refugees from the neighboring Blue Nile State in Sudan, which has been affected by insecurity since June 2011. According to UNHCR, more than 21,000 refugees have arrived Maban County, whose population is estimated at 45,000. In addition, over 11,000 people have returned to Maban County from Sudan since last year. The refugee and returnee populations, which together are over 70 percent of the the size of the host population, now overwhelm access to local resources.

In the neighboring county of Longuchock, which is currently at Stressed levels, food security conditions are expected to deteriorate during March-April. This is due to near exhaustion of last year's 2011 harvest, combined with a high concentration of returnees (equivalent to about 10-15 percent of the local population) that arrived in the first half of 2011. The returnees did not cultivate and are very much reliant on the resident population, thus increasing competition for available food at a time when food is scarce. Typically, the Longuchock population relies on exchange of grain produced in Maban, but with increased demand by returnee and refugee populations in Maban, significant access is unlikely,

exacerbated by last year's poor crop performance. According to the MAF/FAO 2011 CFSAM findings, Upper Nile State is projected to face a 67,000 MT cereal shortfall in 2012. Similar to Jonglei, this is twice the four-year (2007-2010) average shortfall.

Given the above factors, at least 20 percent of the population in Maban and Longuchok are expected to face Crisis food security levels. This is already ongoing for Maban, but expected to occur in Longuchok beginning in March/April through August. This projection assumes that the refugee population in Maban will remain concentrated in Maban County. Though there is a possibility that some grain from the mechanized farms of Renk could reach needy areas of Upper Nile locations, this could be constrained by poor road infrastructure, and areas along the Nile are the most likely to benefit if the grain find its way southwards. However, this factor needs close monitoring. Another factor to watch for is the threat of growing tensions and insecurity associated with migration of seasonal nomads from Sudan into Upper Nile State. The migration continues in Manyo, Renk, Fashoda, Panyikang, Melut, Maban, Longuchok counties, but there are accusations of the nomads violating a key migration agreement such as carrying weapons when entering South Sudan, killing wild animals and evading tax, while the nomads claim harassment and mistreatment by South Sudan security forces.

Nile Sobat Zone counties of Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, Fangak and Khorfulus

Crisis conditions persist in Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, Fangak and Khorfulus counties, where last year's insecurity significantly disrupted livelihoods and displaced about 5-10 percent of the Mayom population into Rubkona and Abiemnom. About 20-25 percent of the Mayom population failed to cultivate in 2011 due to insecurity and fear of land mines planted during the fighting. Crisis levels of food insecurity are due to the complete absence of grain for those who did not cultivate, dismal crop performance for the population that cultivated, and market disruption, and this will persist until September – October harvests. Meanwhile, Abiemnom continues to host IDPs from Abyei and returnees that are equivalent to over 70 percent of the host population, severely stressing the available food stocks and off farm food sources, thus overwhelming the capacity of hosts to support these populations. In addition, market supplies in the area have significantly reduced since the May 2011 trade restrictions, continued tensions at the Sudan-South Sudan border, exacerbated by insecurity in the neighboring South Kordofan region, which harbors the main trade routes to this zone. A direct consequence of the trade restrictions is that sorghum prices, a staple food, will remain unseasonably high. Compensation of food shortfalls by selling livestock to purchase food in markets seems unlikely for most as grain is not likely to be readily available from either local production or Sudan. According to the MAF/FAO 2011 CFSAM findings, Unity State is projected to face a 58,000 MT cereal shortfall in 2012. This is more than twice the 2007-2010 average of 27,000 MT.

In Pariang County, there are about 26,000 refugees from South Kordofan, currently located in Yida refugee camp with no dependable livelihoods except food aid assistance and potential support from the host population. The refugees are equivalent to 25-30 percent of the host population which represents a significant burden on sharing of local resources. The refugees started arriving in June last year and have increased over time as insecurity escalated in South Kordofan. The likelihood of the refugees returning to their homes soon is minimal, given deteriorating conditions back home and insecurity along the evacuation route for refugees attempting to flee into South Sudan. This insecurity has reduced flow of refugees into Unity State since December. Refugees' intentions to stay in Unity State are indirectly signaled by a recent announcement by the Nuba Mountains Education Secretary of the intention to transfer all secondary schools from war affected areas in South Kordofan to Yida in Pariang County, implying that the refugees are unlikely to return home soon.

In Khorfulus County, militia insecurity caused failure of 15 – 20 percent of the Khorfulus population to cultivate as they had been displaced to Ayod by insecurity during February 2011. They started returning home around July, when crops were in the second month of growth. This has serious implications because the community is much more reliant on grain from own production than their neighbors, and loss of an entire cropping season implies loss of a major food source. Due to a lack of harvest, the population started hunting and gathering in as early as October and have already consumed and exhausted food gathered. This is unusual because half of the food gathered during the dry season is typically stored for consumption during the lean season and supplemented with own sorghum stocks. In Fangak, crisis food insecurity levels are anticipated starting in March/April when the dry season peak fishing and water plants collection ends. Last year, households lost their crops to severe flooding.

Crisis conditions continue and are expected to persist through June 2012 in Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, and Khorfulus counties, driven mainly by 2011 militia insecurity, arrival of refugees from South Kordofan and Abyei, reduced sorghum flows from Sudan, and poor harvests that have caused high grain shortfalls that are now facing resident populations. Asset

poor, refugees and returnee households in all affected areas will remain at Crisis food security levels until August. These projections assume that the recently completed and ongoing peace initiatives between Sudan nomads and their South Sudanese hosts along the Sudan – South Sudan border will sustain normal migration and peaceful coexistence during the remaining parts of this year’s dry season migration (February – May/June), thus mitigating potential insecurity between these nomads and their hosts. The projections also assume that reduced flow essential staple foods such as sorghum into South Sudan will continue, thus sustaining grain shortages in markets and above-average prices.

Western Flood Plains Zone counties of Aweil East, North, Centre and, Gogrial East and West, and Twic counties

Following the October sorghum harvest, poor households in the Northern Bahr El Gazal counties of Aweil East, North and Centre, Gogrial East and West, and Twic transitioned from Crisis to Stressed levels. However, the transition only lasted until December as harvests were significantly below-average due to effects of prolonged dryness during June – July 2011, exacerbated by demand from high IDP and returnee concentrations, limited sorghum supplies from Sudan, and high grain prices. Crisis conditions have recurred since January, when most harvest stocks run out. Responses by poor households in Aweil counties include increased reliance on wild food, labor and petty trade to meet needs during January – March, but these are unlikely to meet food needs due sorghum scarcity and above average seasonal prices, exacerbated by high state cereal deficits. According to the MAF/FAO 2011 CFSAM findings, Northern Bahr El Gazal is projected to face a 56,000 MT cereal shortfall in 2012, which is about 170 percent of the 2007-2010 average. Also, there is increased competition with returnees for petty trade and labor opportunities. Poor households in Gogrial and Twic counties are likely to increase reliance on better-off kin, increase movement to fishing areas for more fish and water lily plants as well as dry season fruit gathering but these will not be sufficient to compensate for harvest shortfalls. There is also a likelihood of reduced amounts accessed due to competition or support to displaced kin from Abyei. Households in the southern parts of Gogrial (Ajiep and Kuajok), will also be affected as they heavily rely on labor exchange for grain with the neighboring Jur of Wau County during December – January. The grain is stored for staggered consumption during March – July. This labor exchange mechanism has not been utilized this year because of extreme poor crop performance in Jur County last year. The main alternative left is to increase desert date collection, which will be largely insufficient to meet food needs.

Therefore, asset poor households, returnees, and the displaced population from Abyei will continue to experience significant food consumption gaps during February - June. This could exacerbate the chronic multi-faceted malnutrition that is more prevalent during the dry season, or force households to employ irreversible coping strategies. The situation is most critical in Twic County, which is still hosting 35-40,000 refugees from Abyei, equivalent to 15-20 percent of the total Twic population. These populations are relying on humanitarian assistance and the host population to meet basic food needs.

Overall, Crisis conditions will face populations in the Aweil East, North, Centre and, Gogrial East and West, and Twic counties from February through August. These projections assume that the displaced from Abyei will remain in Warrap’s Twic County as they still fear to go back home citing the presence of the Sudan forces, risk of landmines, lack of food assistance, and lack of livelihood opportunities. Another assumption is that recently completed and ongoing peace initiatives between Sudan nomads and their South Sudanese hosts along the Sudan – South Sudan border will sustain normal migration and peaceful coexistence during the remaining parts of this year’s dry season migration (February – May/June). The projections also assume that limited or lack of flow of sorghum from Sudan will continue, thus sustaining above-average prices.

Table I. Less likely events over the next six months that could change the above scenario

| Area | Event | Impact on food security outcomes |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Nile – Sobat Zone (Mayom, Abiemnom, and Pariang)</p> <p>Western Flood Plains (Aweil and Gogrial counties)</p> | Increased Sudan-South Sudan sorghum flows | <p>Increased sorghum flows into South Sudan would improve supplies to markets and gradually reduce high sorghum prices. Most households in these locations have livestock which are a key income source they would sell and purchase much needed grain, especially to meet increased energy needs during cultivation and lean season (June – September).</p> <p>For households in affected areas of the Western Flood Plains, improved sorghum supplies and reduced prices would be extremely beneficial to poor households who are reliant on petty trade, labor and markets to meet their food needs. This also applies to poor households that are reliant on small livestock for income to purchase grain.</p> |
| <p>All locations hosting refugees</p> <p>Gogrial and Twic Counties</p> <p>Paring County</p> <p>Maban County</p> | Refugees returning home | Return of Abyei, South Kordofan and South Blue Nile refugees back home would significantly reduce pressure on their host populations in Twic, Gogrial, Pariang and Maban counties. This is especially after the Sudan Government allowed access to humanitarian agencies towards end of February. However, the refugees are less likely to return immediately and in any significant numbers as they would first make observations of how security conditions evolve back home. |
| <p>Eastern Flood Plains</p> <p>Akobo East, Akobo West, Wuror, Duk Payuel, DukFadiet, Twic East, Pibor</p> | Escalated insecurity | Following arrival of as many as 10,000 troops to conduct disarmament in the areas affected by insecurity has potential to increase tension or conflict. This scenario is drawn from past disarmament experiences in the past four years. |