SOUTH SUDAN Food Security Outlook April-September 2009

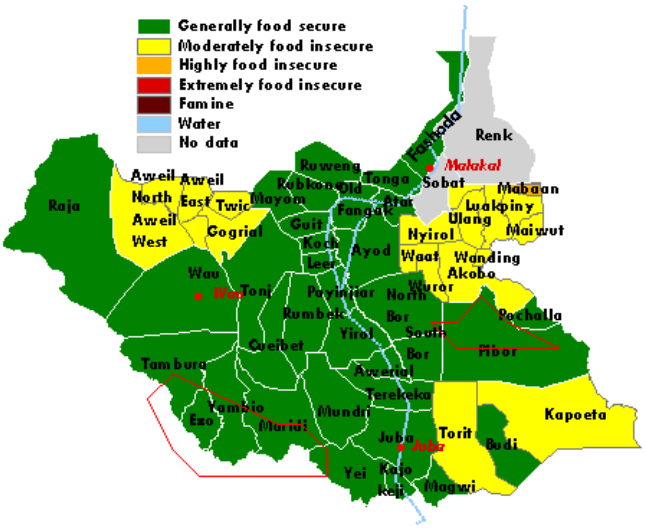
- Food insecurity remains concentrated in the northwest, eastern, and southeastern parts of south Sudan. An estimated 450-550,000 people are currently food insecure across the country, mostly from these areas.

- The number of food insecure people is projected to increase to 1 million by July, due to worsening conditions brought about by typical hunger season food deficits. However, improved food security conditions can be expected during October, the peak of harvest in most food insecure areas.

- Anticipated May-July food shortfalls are expected to be filled through food aid and potentially by government subsidized sorghum in all south Sudan.

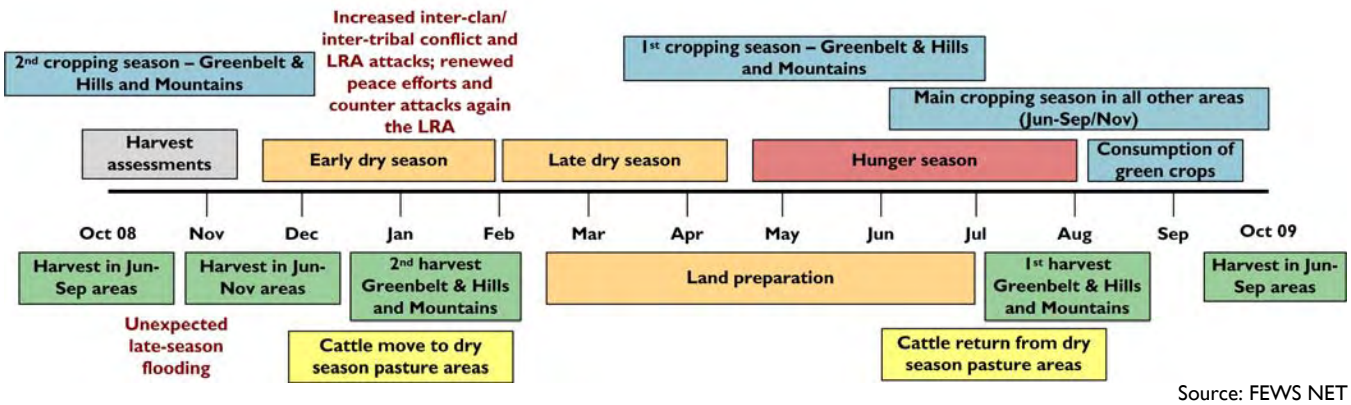
- The April-July cropping season, predominant in Tambura, Ezo, Yambio, Maridi, Kajokeji, Yei and Mundri (Greenbelt Zone) and Juba, Magwi and Torit (Hills-Mountain Zone), has began. The onset of rains was delayed by over two weeks in parts of Yambio, Maridi and Yei but this is unlikely to have a negative impact as it is still early in the season.

Figure 1. Estimated current food security conditions, March 2009



Source: FEWS NET
For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

Current food security conditions food security scenario (April 2009)

Current food security conditions are mixed. Though many areas remain food secure, there are significant pockets of food insecurity in south Sudan, mostly concentrated to the east (Eastern Flood Plains), northwest (Western Flood Plains), and

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southeast (parts of the Hills and Mountains and Pastoral Zones) (Figures 1 and 2). This food insecurity started during December - January, due to harvest shortfalls caused by either a prolonged dry spell and/or un-seasonal flooding, depending on the location.

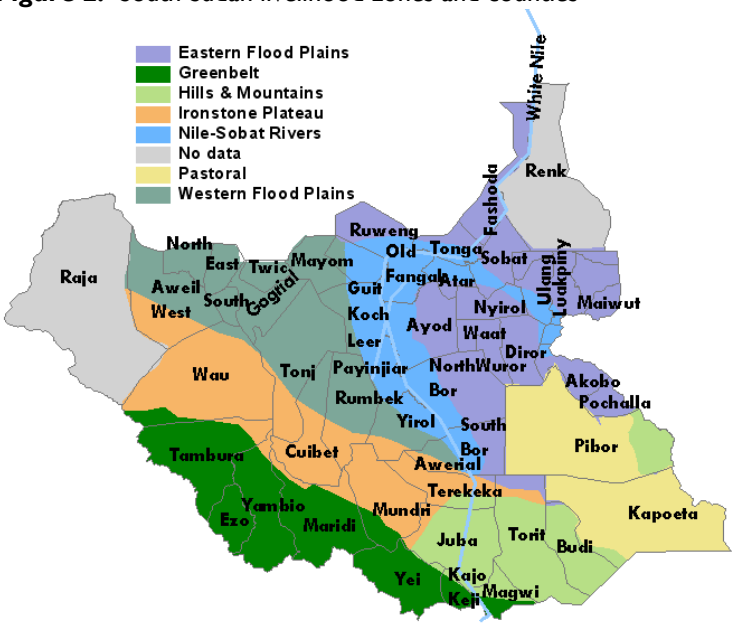
Flooding-induced crop shortfalls caused food insecurity among poor households that have little or no livestock in the **Western Flood Plains Zone** starting in December. Also beginning in December, a combination of June-August 2008 dryness, followed by floods and persistent, inter-clan/inter-tribal cattle raiding conflicts, led to food shortfalls across all wealth groups concentrated in the southeastern parts of the **Eastern Flood Plains Zone**.

Stable food security conditions in the **Nile-Sobat River Zone** have been sustained by increased fish availability and access that typically peak during January-April. Stable food security conditions also continue in the **Ironstone Plateau Zone**, but food insecurity among poor crop producers, especially in last year's drought affected areas, is likely to emerge during the May-July hunger season.

Food insecurity caused by last year's crop shortfalls persists in the eastern parts of the **Hills and Mountains Zone.** Conditions in **Greenbelt** Zone remain stable but remain threatened by insecurity caused by armed militia groups, particularly the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). It is estimated that over 100,000 people have been exposed to the LRA insecurity since December 2008. Meanwhile, the first April-July cropping season is just starting in the Greenbelt and the Hills and Mountains zones due to ongoing onset of rains (Figure 3).

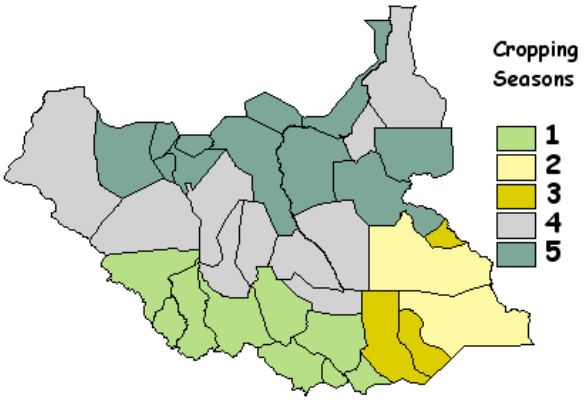
Moderate food insecurity exists in the Pastoral (Arid) Zone as grain exchange opportunities significantly decline following seasonal movements of animals to long distance grazing areas. April-September is a critical time for this zone as this is the rainy season, a period when precipitation facilitates pasture and water replenishment that is critical for pastoral households predominant in this region. It is important to note that food security monitoring in the Pastoral Zone has been inadequate over the years, and requires improvement.

Figure 2. South Sudan livelihood zones and counties



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 3. Cropping seasons across Southern Sudan



1. *April-July and September-December season (Unimodal rains with two cropping seasons)*
2. *April-September in (pastoral areas) – Limited single season especially in the more arid southern parts*
3. *Mixed seasons – Areas with two seasons in highlands and one season in lowlands*
4. *June-November/December – single season (Unimodal*
5. *June-September – single season (Unimodal)*

Seasonal progress

The rains have started in south Sudan, facilitating onset of the April-July cropping season predominant in the Greenbelt and Hills-Mountains Zones. Here, rains started during February-March, but became more established in many parts in early April. Following less than normal rains during mid March –mid April (figure 4c and 4d), planting began about 20 days later than normal in some pockets (Figures 4a and 4b). Affected areas received 50-80 percent of normal rains during that time. Despite the delay, crop water conditions (especially for maize) during early April were satisfactory and even above average especially in the Hills and Mountains zone (Figure 4e).

The Pastoral Zone has received rains (Figures 4c and 4d) but crop conditions are unsatisfactory. It is important to note that this is typical, especially in the southern parts of this zone, where rains are usually limited and erratic. Here, households are predominantly pastoral, but some practice sorghum cultivation, whose performance is unreliable. Rains are set to begin during May-June in all other livelihood zones.

Beyond the Pastoral livelihood zone, vegetation conditions were above-normal during early April (figure 5), implying availability of pastures in most parts of south Sudan.

Figure 4a. Start of season by zone as of 1-10 April, 2009

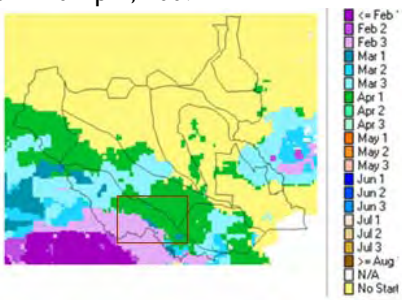


Figure 4b. Start of season anomalies by zone as of April 1-10, 2009

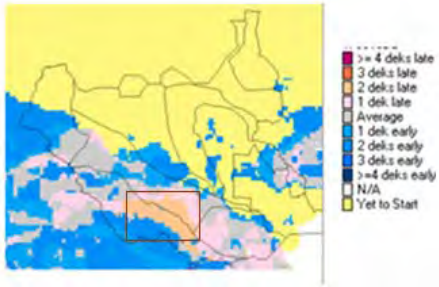


Figure 4c. Rainfall anomalies (mm) March 14-12 April, 2009

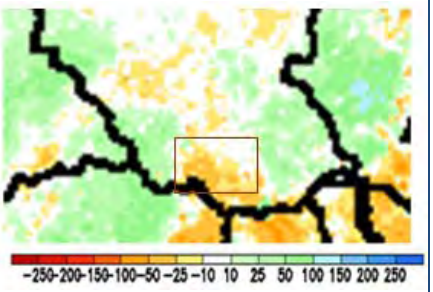


Figure 4d. Percent of normal rainfall March 14-12 April, 2009

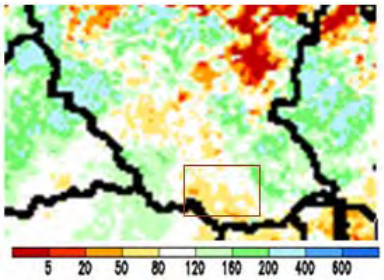


Figure 4e. WRSI anomalies by zone as of 1-10 April 2009

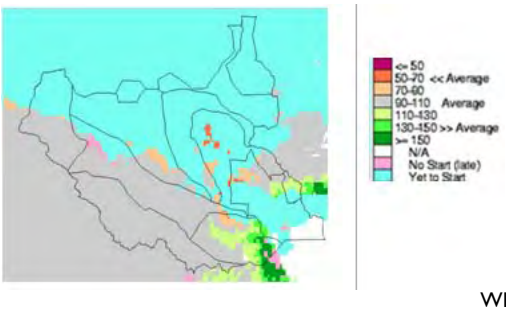
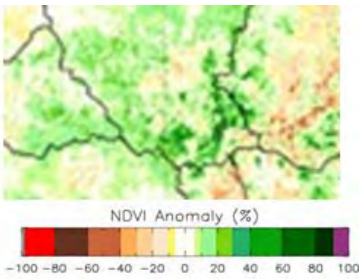


Figure 5. Vegetation anomalies as of 1-10 April 2009



WRSI – Water Requirements Satisfaction Index
Sources: Rainfall-NOAA; Start of Season &WRSI – NOAA & USGS; Vegetation - NASA

Most likely food security conditions during April – September 2009

Food insecurity is expected to persist in area 1 (Aweil East, West, south, North Twic and Gogrial) as the hunger season peaks during May-July.

Conditions will slightly worsen in area 2 (northern parts of Tonj and Wau) due to earlier than normal exhaustion of last year's harvest. Access to potential local surpluses might be constrained by inter-clan tensions, especially in Tonj. Food shortages will also persist in area 3 (Longuchok, Maiwut, Luakping and Ulang), but still remain within the typical hunger season limits.

Conditions will likely worsen in area 4 (Waat, Wuror and Akobo) due to a combination of last year's crop shortfalls, compounded by hunger season food deficits and above-normal cattle raiding conflicts with pastoralists in area 5 (Pibor

County). In general, area 4 remains inaccessible to humanitarian agencies because of repeated conflicts. Area 5 (part of Pibor) has been stable until an unprecedented level of cattle raiding took place with the neighboring Nuer tribe (of area 4) in March, displacing close to 5,000 people. The extent of impact on food access has not been established.

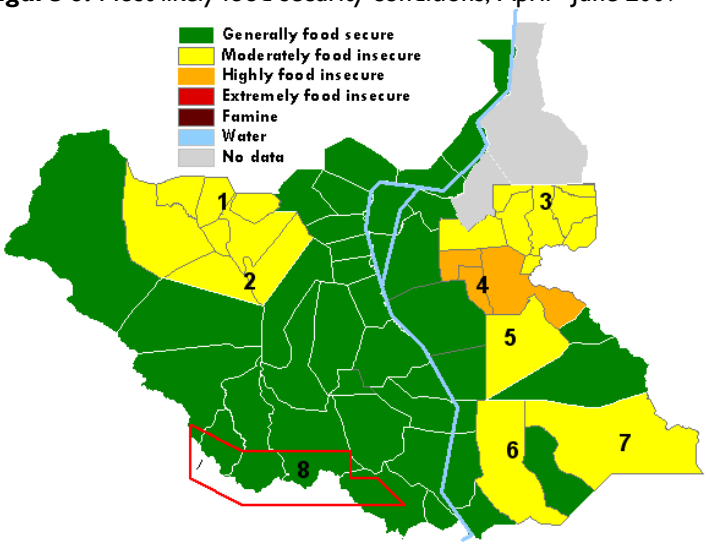
Deterioration in food security conditions is also anticipated in area 6 (Figure 7) due to the progressing of hunger season and increased inaccessibility caused by June-September rains.

The negative impact of 2008 crop shortfalls and the hunger season will be more evident especially in May-June in area 6 (Figure 6). Torit might experience improvements with onset of harvest of early crops in July – August (Figure 7).

Shortages in area 7 (Kapoeta) are partially due to limitations on grain and livestock market access, more than crop production, as the area is predominantly pastoral. Here, improvements can be expected as a result of the April-July rains but unpredictability of performance of often erratic rainfall could sustain current moderately food insecure conditions until September.

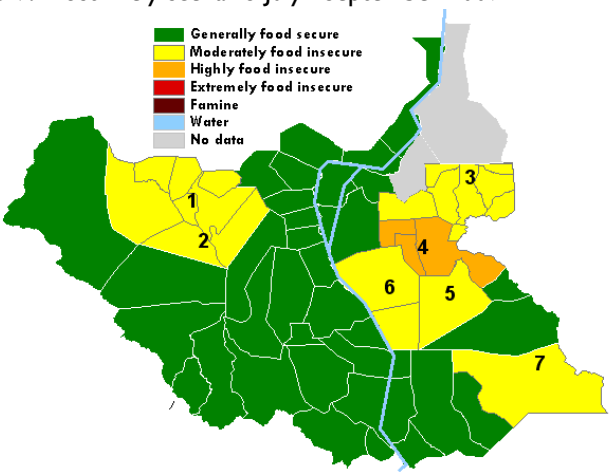
Concerns over presence of refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo and recent insecurity persist over area 8 (Figure 1). The refugees affect food insecurity in that they are reliant on food aid and the host population. Apart from refugees, most households affected by insecurity here are likely to recover, especially after July harvests.

Figure 6. Most likely food security conditions, April– June 2009



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 7. Most likely scenario July– September 2009



Source: FEWS NET

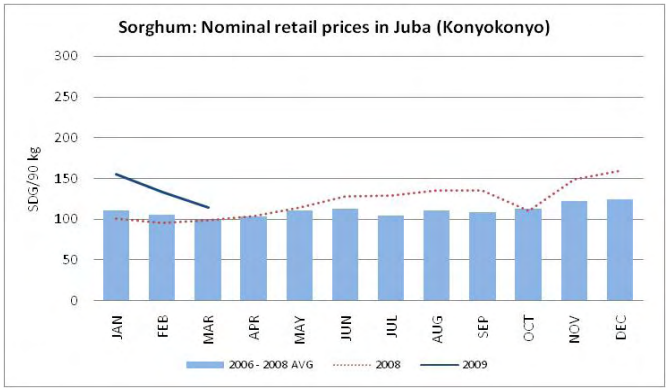
Overall, slightly improvements can be expected towards September in some areas due to improved food access following the "green harvest" at this time. However, in areas highlighted in Figure 7, these improvements will not be significant until October when harvests peak or are being concluded.

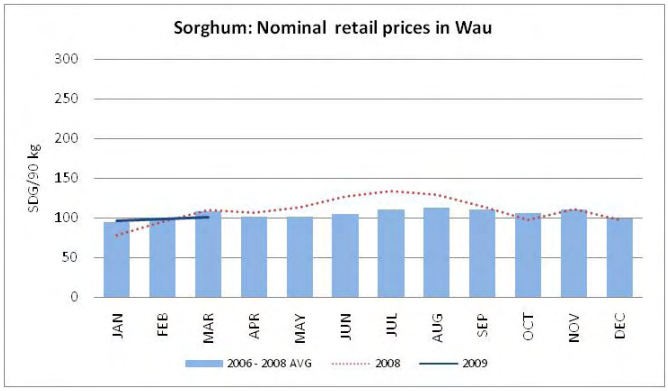
Table 1: Events which could change the food security outlook

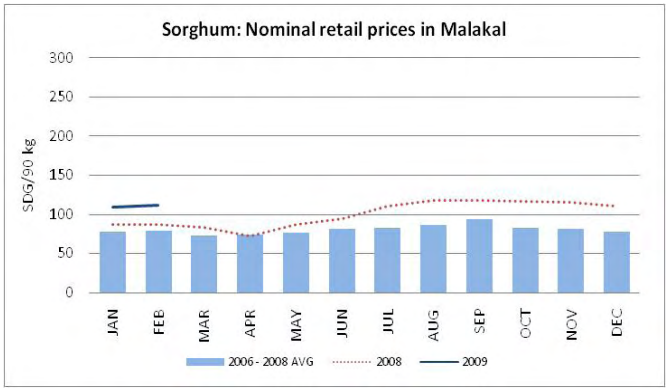
Geographic Focus Area	Possible events in the next 6 months that would change the most likely scenario in this area	Impacts on food security conditions	Likelihood of occurrence*	Key variables to monitor
Area 1- Aweil East, West, North, South Twic, Gogrial	Poor rains	Reduced sorghum and groundnut yields	Unlikely	Rainfall amounts and distribution
Area 4 – Wuror, Waat, Akobo and Nyirol	Cattle raiding exceeds current levels	Reduced food access and constrained humanitarian access, resulting to worsening conditions especially in Wuror, Waat, Akobo	Likely but unpredictable	Population and livestock movements, conflict patterns, farm sizes, seed access, rainfall patterns
Area 5 - Pibor, Bor (Fig-7)	Cattle raiding exceeds current levels	Reduced food access, particularly in Pibor	Likely but unpredictable	
Area 8 –Yambio, Maridi, Ezo	LRA attacks escalate	Displacement of local population, curtailing cultivation in some areas, especially those along the DRC – Sudan border	Likely but unpredictable and sporadic	Population movements, attacks and cultivation activities

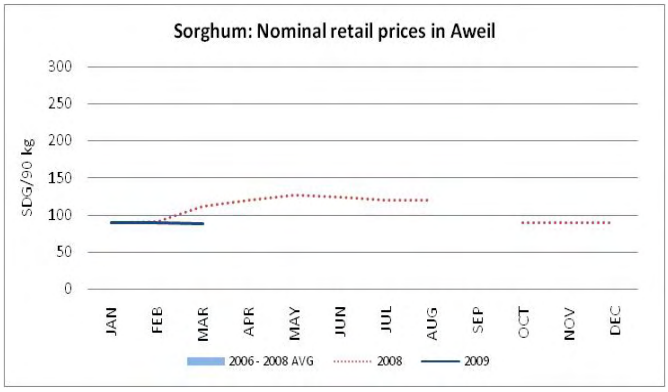
Monthly prices are supplied by the WFP VAM.

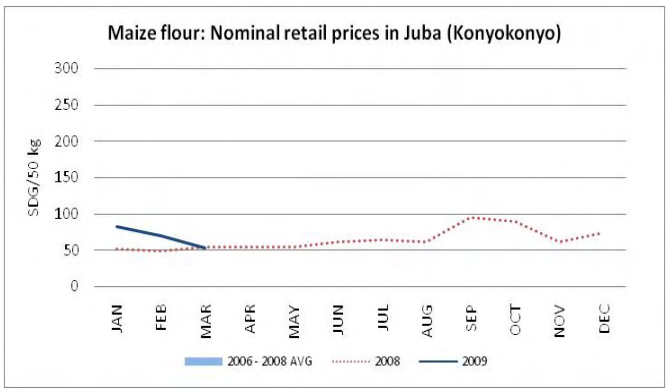
southern Sudan: Sorghum and maize flour are important to all households in southern Sudan, while wheat flour and groundnuts are mostly purchased by urban households. Wau and Aweil are the main markets in and around chronically food insecure areas. Malakal is the main market of Renk, a key sorghum surplus producing area. Juba is the capital city market and is also a transshipment point between borderline food insecure and surplus areas. Kapoeta is located in a predominantly pastoral region representing the food security conditions in this area as well as the cross border trade between Sudan and Kenya.

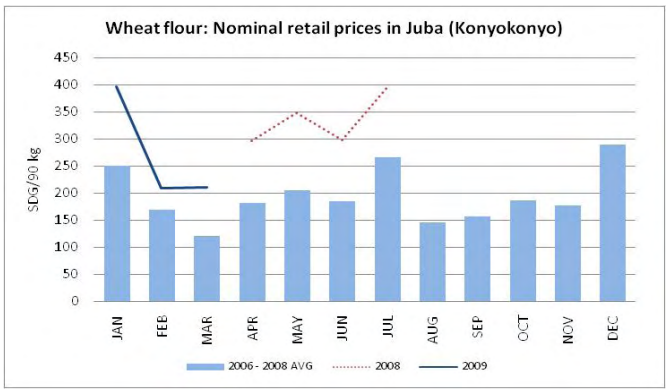









Maize flour: Nominal retail prices in Juba (Konyokonyo)
SDG/50 kg
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006 - 2008 AVG
2008
2009


Wheat flour: Nominal retail prices in Juba (Konyokonyo)
SDG/90 kg
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
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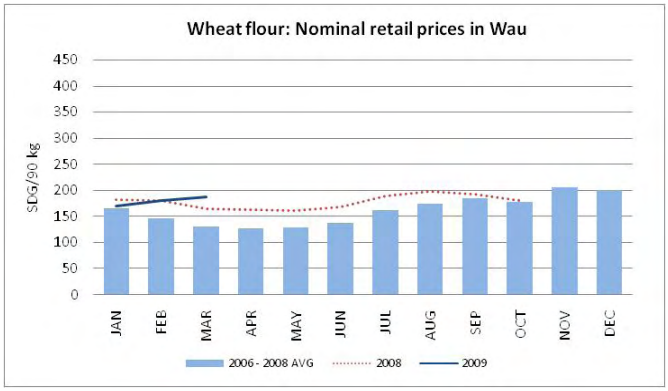
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006 - 2008 AVG
2008
2009


Wheat flour: Nominal retail prices in Wau
SDG/90 kg
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
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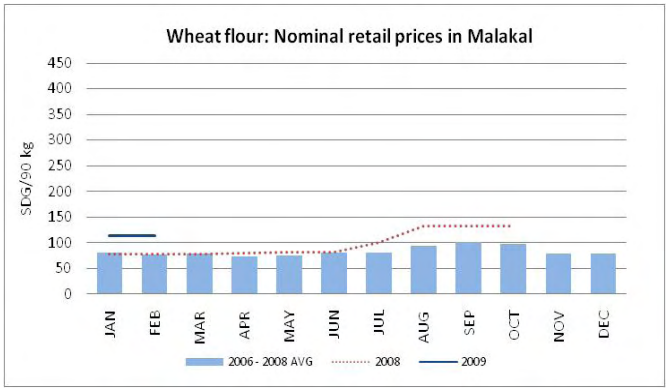
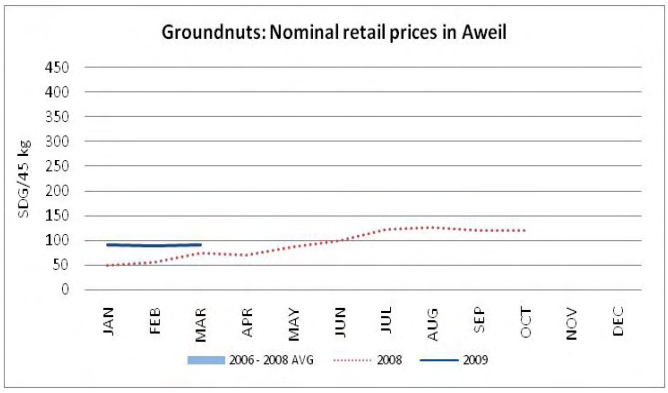
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006 - 2008 AVG
2008
2009


Wheat flour: Nominal retail prices in Malakal
SDG/90 kg
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006 - 2008 AVG
2008
2009


Groundnuts: Nominal retail prices in Aweil
SDG/45 kg
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006 - 2008 AVG
2008
2009