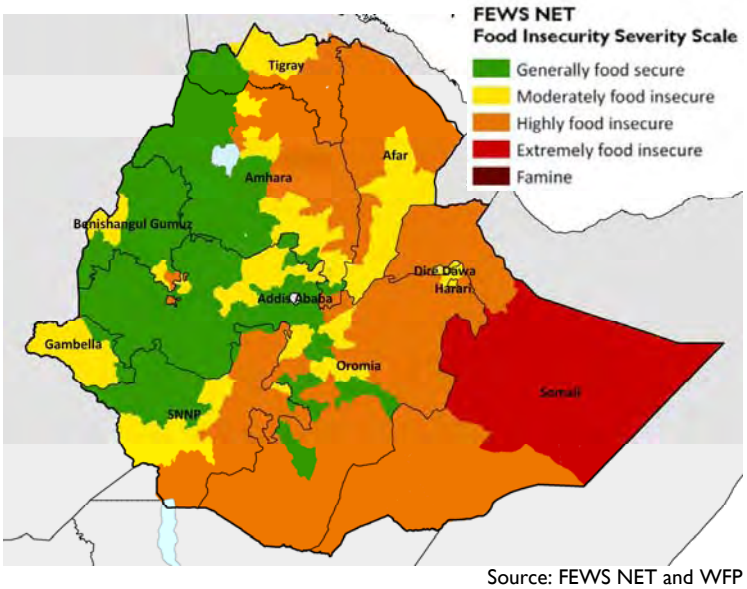
ETHIOPIA Food Security Outlook — July to December 2009

- Ethiopia continues to face high levels of food insecurity. It is estimated that 6.2 million people will require emergency food assistance from July 2009 until the end of the year, an increase of 1.3 million people over the January figures. Based on current estimates, the total food requirement from June to December is 462,500 MT. Both estimates are expected to be revised based on the findings of the *belg/gu* assessment, which are expected in August.

- Food security in the *belg*-crop producing parts of the country, as well as the eastern *meher* crop producing areas, is expected to deteriorate further during the July-September period, following the poor *belg* harvest and depletion of stocks from the pervious *meher* harvest.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, July 2009

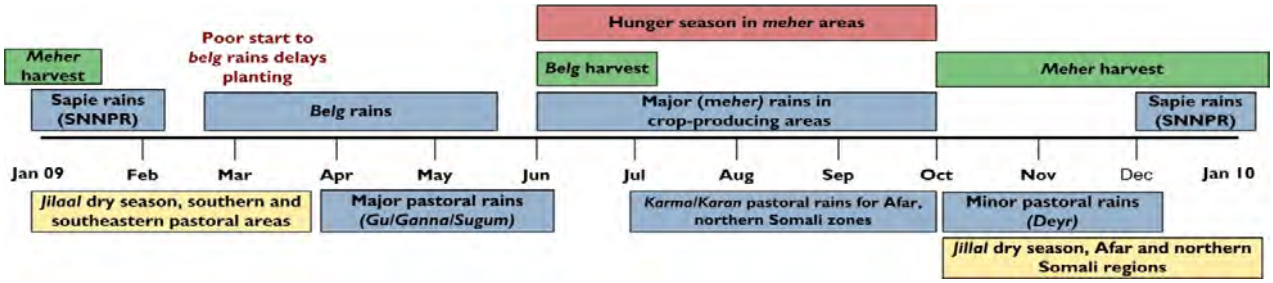


Source: FEWS NET and WFP

- In the pastoral region of Afar, the southern areas of Oromiya and most of zones of Somali region, rains during the past three seasons have been below-normal, including the *sugum* (March to May) of 2009. Food security is poor and is expected to deteriorate further as the main season *karma/karran* (July to September) rains are forecast to be below-normal.

- Over the next six months, food security in the southern zones of Somali region, neighboring lowlands of Oromia and South Omo Zone of SNNP Region is expected to improve with the onset of the *deyr* (October-December) rains. However, the respite will likely be short-lived and food security will continue to heavily depend on external assistance.

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

Current food security conditions

Ethiopia continues to face high levels of food insecurity. The Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) released a document on the 13th of July 2009 that provided a project relief food requirement for the second half of 2009.

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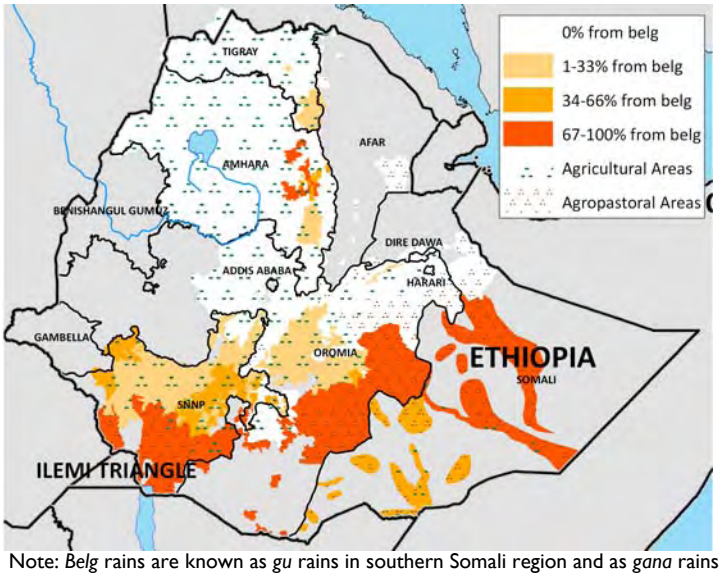
This document is meant to provide an early indication of the possible relief food requirement until results from the *belg/gu* season assessment become available in August. Taking into account the current food security situation, performance of the *belg/gu* season, the poor start of the *Kiremt* rains and the forecast for the remainder of the season, three scenarios were developed. In the most likely scenario, 6.2 million people will require emergency food assistance between July and December 2009. Under this scenario the total food requirement from June to December would be 462,553 MT.

Assistance requirements are expected to be revised based on the government led multi-agency, multi-sector emergency needs assessment that has been carried out in *belg* producing parts of the country and in the pastoral/agro pastoral region of Afar between the June 6 and 25. A total of 11 teams led by DRMFSS and composed of representatives from line ministries, UN agencies, donors and NGOs participated in this assessment. Similarly, the *gu/ganna* seasonal assessment has begun with five teams in the southern pastoral/agro pastoral zones of Somali region and in the neighboring lowlands of Oromia. The assessment is expected to be completed on the 16th of July. Preliminary findings from the assessment teams indicate that the overall performance of the *belg/ganna/Gu* rains was much below normal (Figure 3) in the *belg* crop producing parts of the country (Figure 2), the northeastern pastoral Region of Afar, and most zones of Somali region. Satellite based rainfall estimates (RFE) also support this finding (Figure 3).

Performance of 2009 *belg* crops is also poor according to the findings of the assessment mission. IN southeastern Tigray for example, in normal years some woredas obtain up to 33 percent (Figure2) of their total annual crop production from the *belg* season, with the remainder coming from *meher* production. However, according to the assessment teams, belg season production completely failed this year in this area. Satellite derived imagery suggest that these conditions also exist in areas of eastern Amhara. Teams also reported critical problems with livestock feed availability because of low straw reserves following the previous two poor seasons Water shortages both for livestock and people were reported.

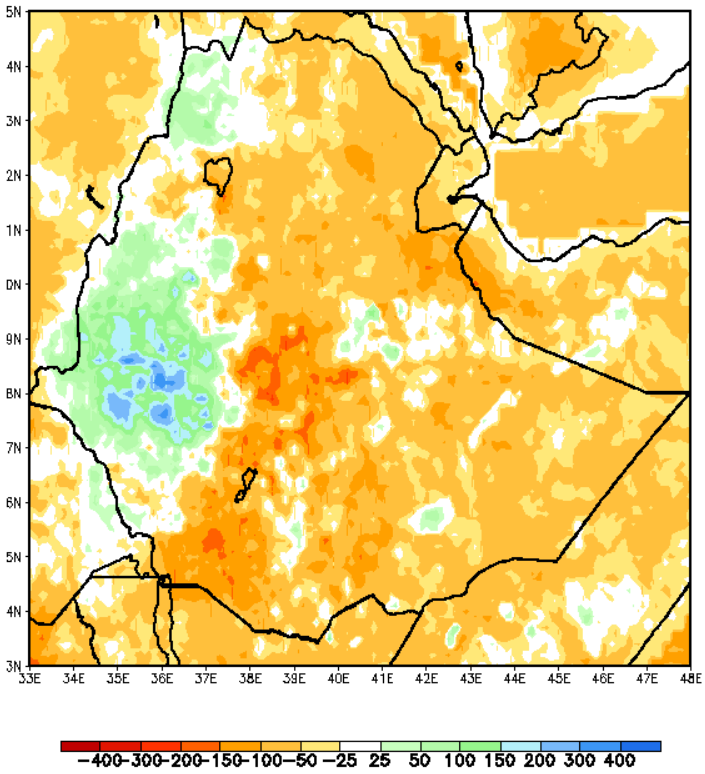
Figure 2. *Belg* grain production as a percentage of total grain production (*Belg* crops defined as those harvested March-August)



Note: *Belg* rains are known as *gu* rains in southern Somali region and as *gana* rains in Oromia

Source: Livelihoods Integration Unit, DMFSS, MOARD, Govt. of Ethiopia, Graphics: FEWS NET

Figure 3. Precipitation Anomaly (mm) Based on NOAA/CPC RFE Climatology Method, March 1 to June 30, 2009



Source: NOAA

Similarly, belg season production in Amhara region was also very poor, with only 30 percent of the planned harvest produced. This follows a failed 2008 belg season. Because dependence on the belg season in some woredas of Amhara region is as high as 100 percent, a poor season has significant impacts on food security. The next harvest in these areas is not expected until June/July of 2010. A significant proportion of the population in these parts of the country is chronically

food insecure and receives assistance through the PSNP, the Government's multi-year assistance program for chronically food insecure populations.

In the southern and eastern *belg* crop producing parts of SNNP and Oromia regions, a similarly poor performance of the belg season was reported. *Belg* rains were late by four to six weeks, and once they started their performance was erratic. This resulted in late planting and wilting of crops at the germination and flowering stages due to moisture stress. Repeated replanting occurred in some woredas due to poor germination. This will extend the hunger period, which normally occurs between February and June, through at least the end of August, and even then the availability of *belg* crops will be low. Meanwhile land that would normally have been replanted with *meher* crops is still covered by belg crops. Thus *meher* crops will not be planted this year in some of these areas. The southern special woredas of Konso, Derashe, Burji and Amaro that heavily rely on the belg season are particularly affected. These areas normally obtain 55 to 100 percent of their total annual production from the *belg* season and poor performance of the belg rains has resulted in near failure of the belg crops in these zones. Similar to the areas in Amhara that are highly dependent on the *belg*, recovery in this areas is not expected until the next *belg* harvest in June/July of 2010.

In the eastern *meher* crop producing parts of the country, including the northeastern highlands of Amhara and Tigray, areas in the rift valley, and East and West Hararghe zones of Oromia region, performance of *meher* crops last year was poor. Following below average performance of the *belg* rains this year, the physical condition of livestock is also poor. Although belg season production only contributes, at most, 15 percent of total annual production in these areas poor performance of the belg rains has also affected long cycle crop which are planted using belg season moisture and harvested during the meher season. In most eastern lowland areas, long cycle maize and sorghum have wilted and farmers are trying to replace them with short cycle, lower yielding varieties. Seed shortages, particularly for short cycle varieties have been reported from different parts of the country. In East and West Hararghe zones, coffee, one of the main cash crops, has been adversely affected by the moisture stress and production prospect is below average.

As a result, food security in these eastern crop producing parts of the country is poor. Parts of the population are currently being assisted, both through the PSNP and emergency programs. It is reported that both PSNP transfers and relief food distribution are late. In most of these areas, there are reports of reductions in meals consumed, increased sales of fuel wood, and increased migration in search of wage labor. Due to a subsequent increase in the labor supply, a decline in wages has also been reported. Supply of food grains to most markets was reported to be poor and prices of cereals have started to increase while prices of livestock are low due to excess supply to the markets. There are also reported increases in the number of severely acutely malnourished children receiving Plumpy'nut from OTPs. Readmission to OTPs is common because in the absence of supplementary feeding for moderately malnourished children and insufficient general ration distribution to food insecure households, the RUTF is shared amongst the entire family.

Food security in the pastoral region of Afar and the northern zones of Somali region is also poor following poor performance of seasonal rains in 2008 and a poor *sugum* (March to May) season in 2009. Sugum rains are the secondary rains for Afar region and the two northern zones of Somali Region, Shinile and Jijiga. Availability of browse, pasture and water is poor, as are livestock body conditions. High livestock mortality has been reported in areas including Abaala woreda and overall a significant reduction in herd size, especially cattle, is reported. Milk production from camels and goats is half of the reference year level and no milk production is reported from cattle. The worst affected woredas are Elidaar, Semurobi, Korre, Dalifagea, Yalo, Teru, Awra, Megalle, and Dalol in Afar region. The main reason for stable food prices was reported to be the ongoing PSNP transfers. PSNP transfers also made significant contribution to household food availability.

The *gu/ganna* rains from April to June are the main rains in the southern zones of Somali Region and neighboring lowlands of Oromia. The *gu/ganna* seasonal assessment began on the 20th of June and is still ongoing. Overall, performance of the rains was below average in these areas. Warder, Gode, Afder and parts of Liben zone received very poor rainfall while Fik, Degehabur and Korahe zones and other parts of Liben received relatively better rain. Critical water shortages are reported in Boh, Danot, and Geladi woredas of Warder Zone and in parts of Gode, Liben and Afder zones. Poor pasture conditions are also reported in most of these areas, hence livestock physical conditions and productivity remain poor. Crop production in the agro pastoral areas is also poor.

Populations in these areas are highly dependent on ongoing relief food distributions. The availability of relief food has also contributed to stabilizing cereal prices though prices of imported food items continue to be high. Although there have been significant improvement in the relief food distribution through the "Hubs and Spokes" mechanism of WFP and the

Government, the quantity distributed is still below the requirement. According to the final report from nutrition and mortality surveys conducted in seven woredas (Ayisha, Bare, Bokh, Degehabur, Filtu, Hamero and Kelafo) of Somali Region between mid April and mid May, the situation is generally considered as either serious or critical. The survey was led by the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI), the Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS), Somali Region Health Bureau, Somali Region Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau and UNICEF.

Table 1. Somali Region Nutrition Survey Findings

Key indicators	Liben Zone	Afder Zone	Fik zone	Gode Zone	Shinile Zone	Degahbur Zone
	Filtu woreda	Barey woreda	Hamero woreda	Kelafo woreda	Ayshaa woreda	Degahbur woreda
Survey design	52 clusters, 779 children	52 clusters, 840 children	51 clusters, 770 children	52 clusters, 1212 children	49 clusters, 598 children	52 clusters, 854 children
Global Acute Malnutrition, % WHZ<-2SD (95% CI)	14.5 (11.1 -17.9)	16.3 (13.3-19.3)	18.4 (15.8-21.1)	18.2 (15.5-21.0)	15.2 (11.4-19.0)	21.9 (18.4-25.3)
Severe Acute Malnutrition, % WHZ<-3SD (95% CI)	0.8 (0.1-1.5)	1.1 (0.5-1.7)	2.2 (1.2-3.2)	2.3 (1.3-3.3)	1.8 (0.8-2.9)	2.2 (0.8-3.6)
CMR Death/10,000/day (95% CI)	0.54 (0.33-0.90)	0.52 (0.27-0.78)	0.16 (0.02-0.29)	0.76 (0.47-1.04)	0.67 (0.35-0.99)	0.79 (0.56-1.01)
U5MR Death/10,000/day (95% CI)	1.70 (0.91-3.15)	1.80 (0.80-2.80)	0.50 (0.07-0.93)	2.03 (1.12-2.95)	1.34 (0.27-2.40)	1.52 (0.73-2.32)
Morbidity (%) – 2 week recall	23.9	31.1	33.5	52.0	20.7	41.8

Source: Multi Agency Coordination Team (EHNRI, UNICEF, SCUS)

According to the interim guidelines from the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit, Early Warning Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of September 2008**,** the nutrition situation is critical in Boh and Degehabur woredas, serious in Kelafo, Hamero, Bare and Ayisha woredas, and poor in Filtu woreda. UN OCHA has reported that in response, the Somali Region Health Bureau called a multi-sectoral planning workshop on 10 July to address the growing nutritional concerns. Survey report recommendations include the immediate resumption of full relief food rations for targeted populations (reduced rations have been distributed in priority 2 and 3 areas since July 2008) and the establishment or strengthening of supplementary feeding programs in areas deemed critical and serious. In critical areas, this should include two-month blanket distributions for all under-fives and pregnant and lactating women, followed by four months' targeted supplementary food for moderately malnourished children under five and pregnant and lactating women. Improved immunization coverage and management of severe acute malnutrition by strengthening mobile health and nutrition services through enhanced NGO engagement was also recommended.

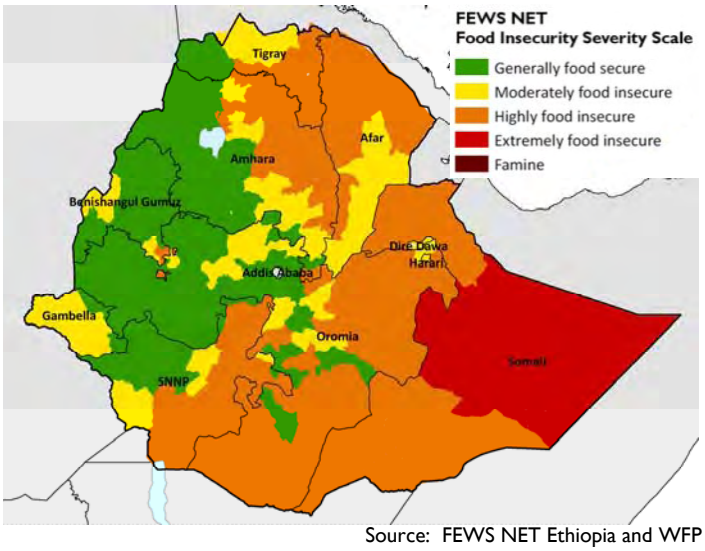
According to CARE, in the neighboring lowland of Borena zone, pasture availability is below normal due to below average *ganna* rains. There is also a report of unusual livestock migration from northern Kenya to Moyale and Dhas Woredas of the zone where relatively better pasture is available. Since May 2009 an estimated 40,000 head of livestock, including cattle, goats, and camels have moved to these woredas. This is expected to lead to overgrazing and rapid depletion of pasture and water. As a result there will be a massive livestock migration in search of water and pasture to the northern part of the Zone. This will pose a great risk for resource based ethnic conflicts between the Gebra, Borana, and Konso.

Most-likely food security scenario (July to December 2009)

Under this scenario it is assumed that following the poor performance of the *belg* (February to May) rains, long cycle crops that would have been planted using the belg rains in April and May, were either not planted or they have been replaced by shorter cycle, lower yielding varieties in the eastern crop producing parts of the country. Based on the outlook provided by the National Meteorology Agency, which suggests below average performance of the *kiremt* (June to September) rains in

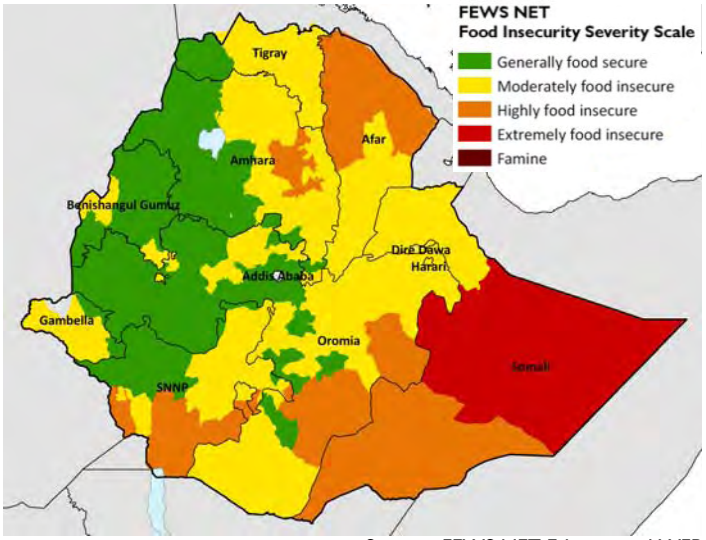
the northwestern, eastern, and central crop producing parts as well as the northeastern pastoral parts of the country, and the below average performance of the kiremt rains to date in these areas, significant yield reductions are assumed in these areas. In addition, the Climate Prediction Center of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has stated that El Niño conditions are present and are expected to last through winter 2009-2010. El Niño in Ethiopia is associated with widespread meteorological drought during the *kiremt* season and a wet Oct – Dec period. EL Nino conditions also suggest that the kiremt rains could cease earlier than normal, contributing to the yield reduction of meher crops. On the other hand, the *deyr* (October to December) rains could be above average. Finally, it is assumed that staple food prices will continue to be high, especially between June and September, the typical hunger period for most parts of the country and the typical peak in staple prices, as the stocks from the previous harvest are lowest before the new harvest in October.

Figure 4. Most-likely food security scenario, July to September 2009



Source: FEWS NET Ethiopia and WFP

Figure 5. Most-likely food security scenario, October to December 2009



Source: FEWS NET Ethiopia and WFP

A significant proportion of the population in the *belg* crop dependent parts of the country (Figure 2), including most parts of SNNPR, the *belg*-dependent areas of the northeastern highlands of Amhara and Tigray regions, areas in central Oromia and parts of Bale zone of Oromia Region are expected to be highly food insecure until the October harvest following the poor performance of two consecutive belg harvests. General food aid needs in these areas is expected to increase. The poor and the very poor populations of these already chronically food insecure populations are expected to be particularly affected because of a decline in labor demand following below average performance of the meher rains. Unless there is a significant improvement in the distribution of the general ration, there will be an increase in the number of admissions to OTP centers and high demand for supplementary and therapeutic food for children under five, as well as for pregnant and lactating mothers. There will also be increased requirements for malaria treatment, especially in September. Food security, especially in the areas that heavily rely on the belg harvest and don't produce significant meher crops, will only improve in June/July 2010 assuming that the belg crops will perform normally at that time.

The eastern *meher* crop producing parts of the country including the northeastern highlands of Amhara and Tigray, areas in the rift valley and East and West Hararghe zones of Oromia region will be highly food insecure during their typical hunger period between June to September as the stocks from last year's *meher* harvest decline and cereal prices increase. Given poor prospects for the meher harvest in these areas this year, incomes from seasonal casual and agricultural labor are expected to decline for the poor and the very poor. Distress sale of livestock among the middle and better off households due to increased need for cereal purchase is also expected to occur during this period. As a result, increased needs for food and non-food emergency assistance will be critical. Extension of food aid distribution will be required for the meher producing areas up until the next harvest begins in October 2009. Although performance of the *meher* crops is expected to be below-normal, food security is still expected to improve with the start of the harvest beginning October in these areas.

In the northeastern pastoral region of Afar and the two northern zones of Somali region, Jijiga and Shinile, the hunger period is expected to start earlier than normal given the predicted poor performance of the main rainy season, *karma/karran*. For most parts of Afar region and Jijiga and Shinile zones of Somali region, if the karma/karran season performs poorly as predicted, it will be their fourth consecutive season of poor rains. Significant loss of livestock compared to the baseline year is expected to occur and this will lead to increased vulnerability to food insecurity. There will be an increased need for water trucking. Terms of trade are expected to deteriorate further as cereal prices increase and livestock prices decline following poor physical condition. This will lead to high levels of food insecurity in wide areas of Afar region and in the Shinile and Jijiga zones of Somali region. In the agro pastoral parts of Afar region and Jijiga and Shinile zones of Somali region, food security is expected to improve beginning October with the start of the *meher* harvest even if the harvest is expected to be below average. The pastoral areas however, will continue to be highly dependent on external food and non food assistance. There will also be an increased need for livestock interventions such as destocking, provision of fodder, water and veterinary services to ensure survival of productive animals after the drought.

The southern seven zones of Somali region (Fik, Degehabur, Gode, Warder, Korahe, Afder and Liben) and neighboring lowlands of Oromia Region (Bale and Borena lowlands) are expected to remain highly and extremely food insecure in the second half of 2009 following the repeated poor performance of seasonal rains, including the most recent gu/ganna (April to June) season. A significant proportion of the population is currently dependent on external assistance for food and the needs are expected to increase. There will also be an increased need for water interventions in the areas that received poor gu/genna rains until the deyr rains begin in October. Nutrition and health intervention requirements especially in treatments of measles, malaria, meningitis, and upper respiratory infections are also expected to increase. Even if the deyr rains are normal to above normal following the occurrence of El Nino, food security is not expected to improve significantly because pastoral recovery will take time until the conceptions and births of livestock occur and will require consecutive seasons of good rains. There will however, be significant improvement in water and pasture availability following the deyr rains.

Table 1: Events which could affect the food security outlook

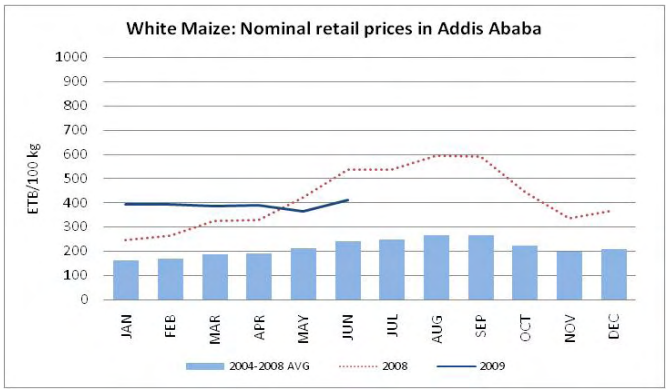
Geographic Focus Area	Possible events in the next 6 months that would change the most likely scenario in this area	Impacts on food security conditions	Likelihood of occurrence*	Key variables to monitor
A. Most parts of SNNPR, the belg dependent areas of the northeastern highlands of Amhara and Tigray regions, areas in central Oromia and parts of Bale zone	• Extended (cessation extended beyond normal time) *kiremt* rains leading to good meher harvest • Improved availability of food aid (general ration and supplementary food) • Stable prices of staples during the hunger period June to September	• Normal meher harvest will increase availability of food for areas that produce both belg and meher crops • Improvement in the availability and access of food at the household level Improved access of food	Unlikely	Kiremt rains Prices of staples Food aid distributions
B. The eastern meher crop producing parts of the country including the northeastern highlands of Amhara and Tigray, areas in the rift valley and East and West Hararghe zones of Oromia region	• Extended (cessation extended beyond normal time) *kiremt* rains leading to good meher harvest • Improved availability of food aid (general ration and supplementary food) • Stable prices of staples during the hunger period June to September	• Normal meher harvest will increase availability of food for areas that produce both belg and meher crops • Improvement in the availability and access of food at the household level • Improved access of food	Unlikely	Kiremt rains Food aid distributions Prices of staples

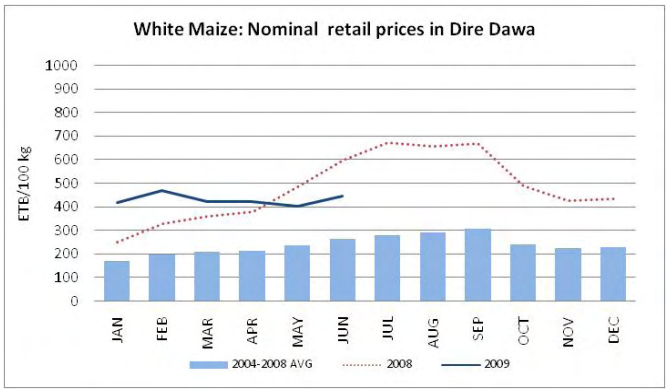
C. Pastoral region of Afar and the two northern zones of Somali region	• Normal karma/karan rains. • Staple prices remain stable	• Improved livesock:cereal ToT, Improved milk availability, improved conception • Access to food improved	Unlikely	Karma/karran rains Prices of staples
D. Southern seven zones of Somali region and neighboring lowlands of Oromia	• Poor deyr rains	• Further deterioration in water and pasture availability	Unlikely	Deyr rains

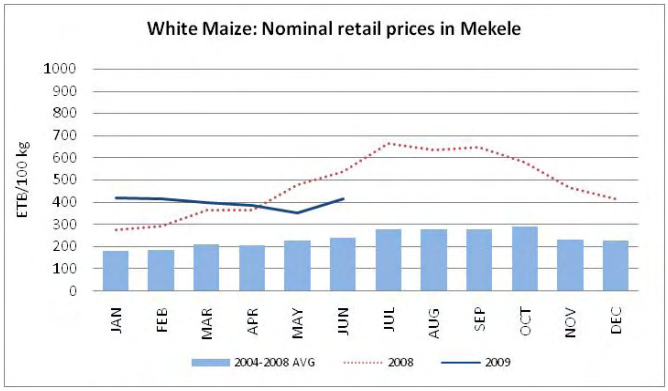
* Probability levels	Description
Unlikely	Could occur in the time period if conditions changed moderately
Very unlikely	Could occur in the time period if conditions changed significantly

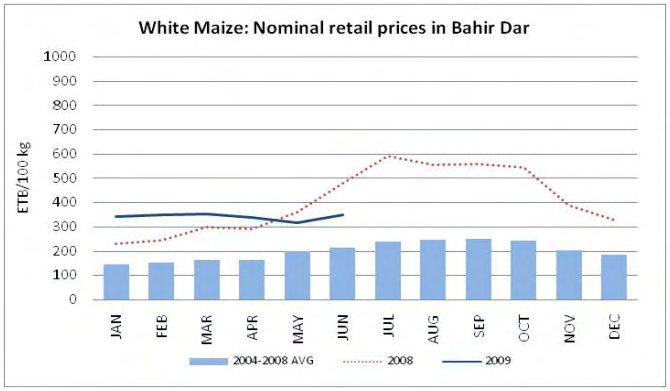
Monthly prices are supplied by FEWS NET enumerators, local government agencies, market information systems, UN agencies, NGOs, and other network and private sector partners.

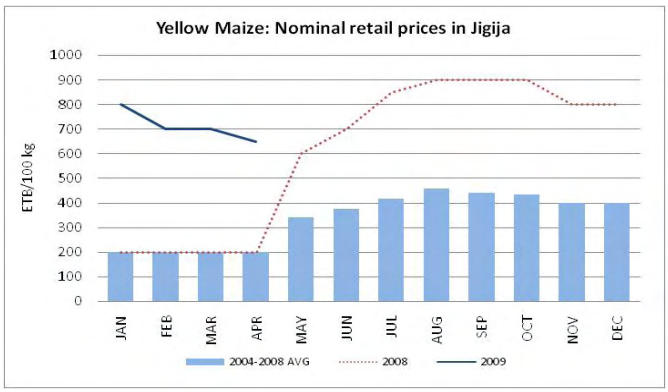
Maize is the most widely consumed cereal by the rural poor. Sorghum is generally one of the cheapest cereals. Teff is also very important throughout the country. The most important markets for teff are the large cities including Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Makele, and Dire Dawa. Addis Abada is the capital city and Dire Dawa, Mekele, and Jijiga are major towns in the eastern, mainly food insecure, parts of the country. Bahir Dar is a major town in a surplus producing area. Jimma represents a generally food secure surplus area. Shashemene is an assembly, wholesale, and retail market and the main transshipment point for cereals from the south and southwest to the center and east. Sodo is an urban center located in the Wolayita zone, and is one of the most chronically food insecure parts of the region.










Yellow Maize: Nominal retail prices in Jigija
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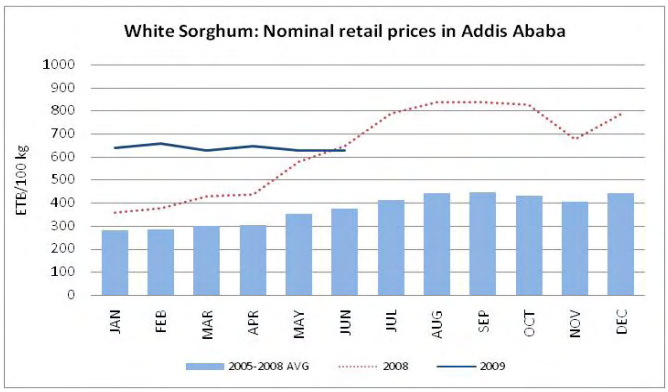
White Sorghum: Nominal retail prices in Addis Ababa
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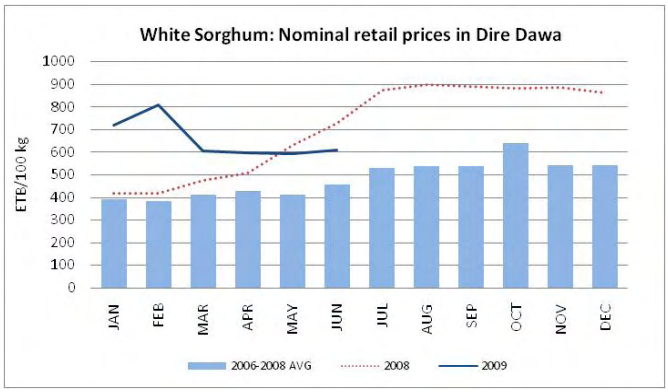
White Sorghum: Nominal retail prices in Dire Dawa
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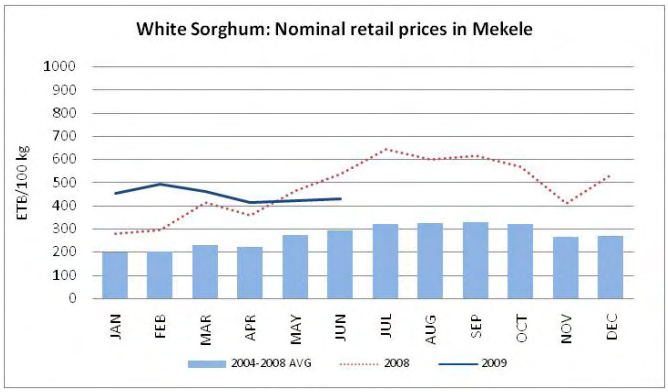
White Sorghum: Nominal retail prices in Mekele
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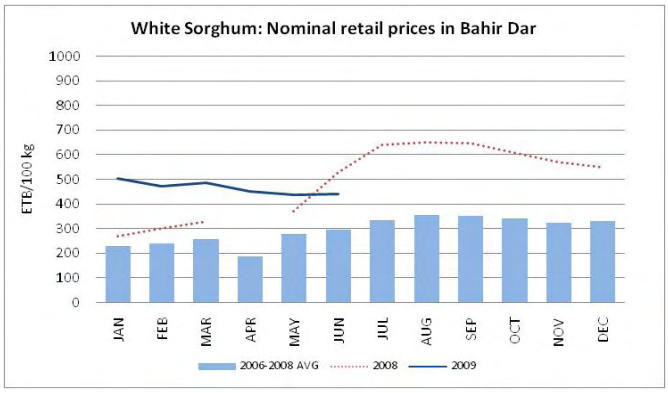
White Sorghum: Nominal retail prices in Bahir Dar
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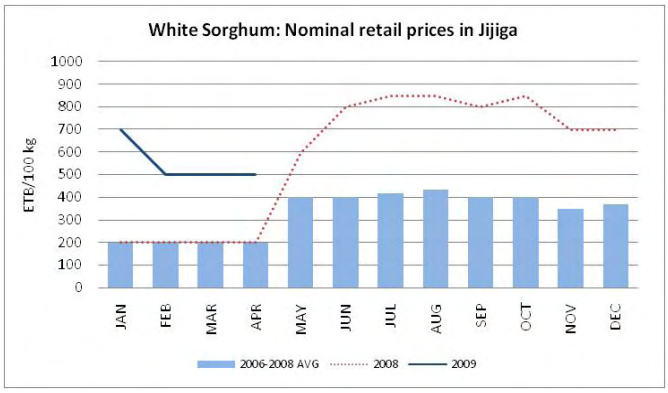
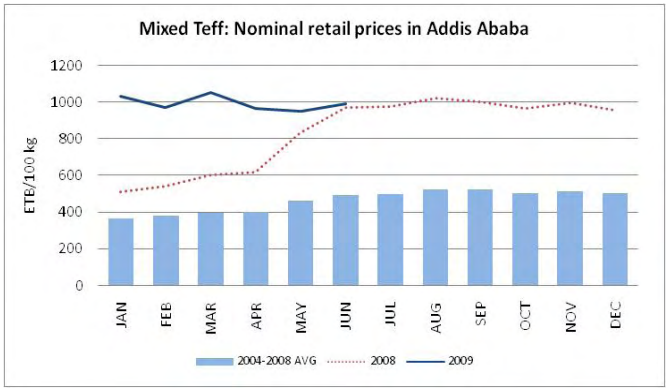
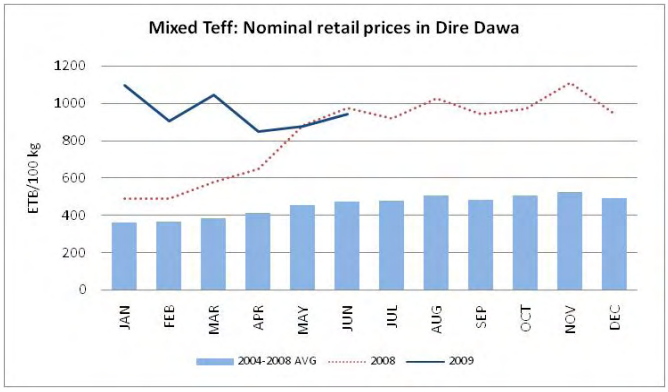
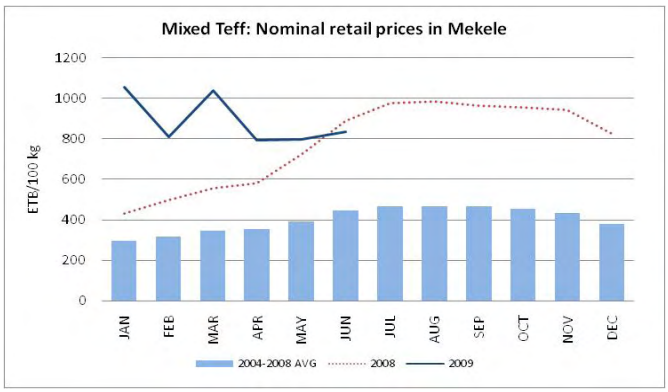
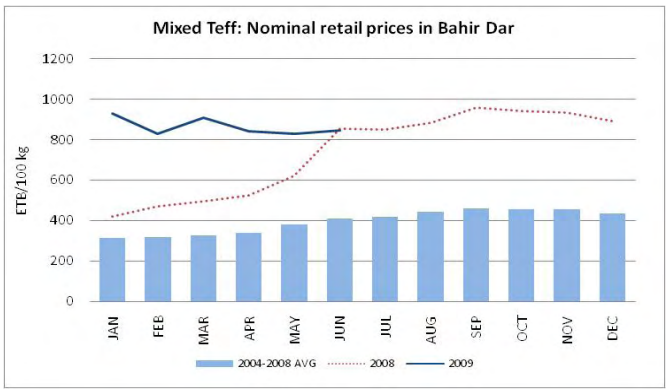
2008
2009


White Sorghum: Nominal retail prices in Jijiga
ETB/100 kg
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2006-2008 AVG
2008
2009


Mixed Teff: Nominal retail prices in Addis Ababa
ETB/100 kg
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2004-2008 AVG
2008
2009


Mixed Teff: Nominal retail prices in Dire Dawa
ETB/100 kg
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
2004-2008 AVG
2008
2009


Mixed Teff: Nominal retail prices in Mekele
ETB/100 kg
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
JAN
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
SEP
OCT
NOV
DEC
2004-2008 AVG
2008
2009


Mixed Teff: Nominal retail prices in Bahir Dar
ETB/100 kg
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
JAN
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
SEP
OCT
NOV
DEC
2004-2008 AVG
2008
2009