

SOMALIA Food Security Outlook Update

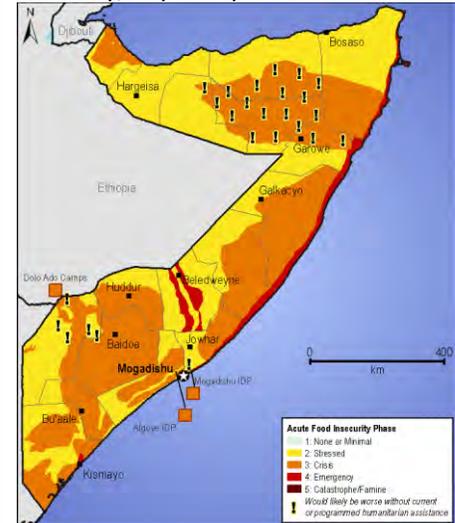
July 2012

Below average crop production is increasingly likely in southern Somalia

Key messages

- In most agropastoral, rainfed areas of the South, food security is expected to deteriorate from July to August due to the anticipated below-average *Gu* harvest.
- Larger than average *Gu* off-season crop production is expected in September due to the large area replanted in the South between late-May and early June.
- Below normal rainfall with long dry spells during May and June in most of Juba, Gedo, Bay, and Bakool regions damaged crops in agropastoral areas of the South. However, July and August *Hagaa* rain performance may increase the overall size of the *Gu* off-season crop production in September. However, this may not fill the grain production shortfall from the poor *Gu* main season performance.
- Due to successive droughts and the failure of the December to February *Hays* rains for the past two consecutive seasons in Guban pastoral livelihood zone of the Northwest, the food security conditions in the coastal areas are quickly and significantly deteriorating.
- Despite the overall nutrition situation improvement since July and August 2011, acute malnutrition in Southern Somalia remains above emergency thresholds according to data from the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit-Somalia (FSNAU).

Figure 1. Projected acute food insecurity, July to September 2012



Source: FEWS NET/Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit-Somalia (FSNAU)

For more information on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 2.0 protocol, please, see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

Food security outlook through September 2012

Food security conditions in most of agropastoral areas in the South, Coastal *Deeh*, and Guban pastoral livelihood zone in the northwestern regions are likely to deteriorate between July and September (Figure 1). The pastoral areas of Central Somalia, the Northeast, and the Northwest will likely remain at their current classifications as a result of good pasture availability.

The 2012 *Gu* rains ended with a dry spell for three consecutive weeks of between late May and June in many parts of the country. Average rains were received in most northern regions and in parts of the central regions resulting in water and pasture improvements. Livestock production and value improved in most pastoral areas with the exceptions of Coastal *Deeh* and Guban pastoral livelihood zone, which both remained dry during the *Gu* resulting in deterioration of livestock body condition and the increased risk of livestock losses.

Agropastoral areas of the Northwest and in Middle Shabelle region have benefited from moderate rains in April and May during the *Gu* which supported crop growth. Outside of Middle Shabelle, most agropastoral areas of the South have had poorer conditions. Pest infestations, primarily from crickets, occurred in the agropastoral areas of Bay, Bakool, Lower and Middle Juba, and Lower Shabelle. During the *Gu* rains in early May, many farmers replanted their crops. However, the rains

ceased a month early resulting in severe moisture stress and crop wilting. A below average harvest is expected from all rainfed, agropastoral livelihoods of the sorghum belt, Middle Juba, and Lower Shabelle where rains were, overall, below average (Figure 3). These areas normally produce the bulk of the annual sorghum production. In the riverine of Lower and Middle Shabelle and Middle Juba, an average crop harvest is expected due to moderate rainfall and access to irrigation. Crops planted in June will be harvested in September.

Hagaa rains started poorly in July in Lower Shabelle and Middle and Lower Juba regions thus delaying planting in the agropastoral areas adjacent to the coast. The crop prospects in agropastoral areas of the coastal strips of Middle and Lower Juba and Shabelle regions will depend primarily on if *Hagaa* rains fall in August. *Karan* rains started in July in the Northwestern agropastoral areas of Awdal and Woqooyi Galbeed regions which further improved crop establishment, pasture regeneration, and water availability (Figure 2).

Staple food prices

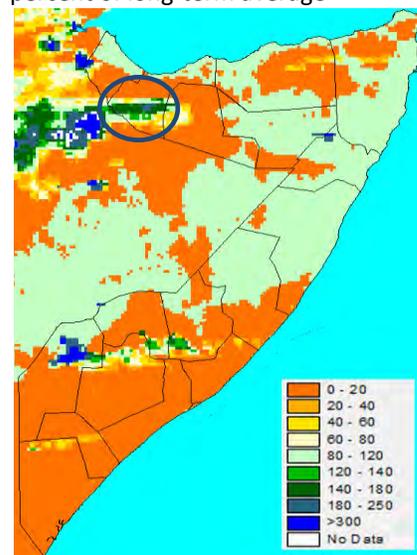
Local cereal prices are expected to increase over the next couple of months, and follow the usual, seasonal trend due to reducing stocks at the main surplus-producing markets. In addition, the expected below-average *Gu* crop harvest from the main cereal producing regions of the South will exacerbate the price rise. In June 2012, sorghum prices increased slightly compared to the previous month, but they are still significantly lower than at the same time last year. However, the price changes could be less if food assistance levels increase. Maize prices are relatively stable due to continued food assistance. However, sorghum is much less often distributed as food aid, and sorghum prices had moderate, seasonal increases from May to June.

Crop performance

In the Northwest, maize and long-cycle sorghum performance improved due to moderate *Gu* 2012 rains and the on time and above average start of the *Karan* rains in July. The October to November cereal harvest is expected to be average to above average depending on the July to August *Karan* rains performance. Despite average seed germination in April due to light to moderate rains in Central Somalia, cowpea and sorghum crop failures have been reported. In Hiran, despite good seed germination in all planted areas at the start of the season, severe moisture stress led to the crop wilting during and after the long dry spell in May, thus below average crop production is expected in rainfed, agropastoral areas. Poor farmers in the riverine area who were unable to pay initial irrigation costs have abandoned cultivation this year and instead are collecting and selling wild fodder, as fodder demand is high for both transient and local livestock. In the Hiran riverine livelihood zone, the irrigated crops, which are primarily grown by the better off or the upper part of the middle wealth group, have performed well, and above average production is expected in August. In addition to grain crops, cash crop cultivation is ongoing and related labor and cropping activities remain seasonally normal. Poor households benefit from labor income since cash crops provide many labor opportunities.

Based on FSNAU field reports, in the cowpea belt, including the southern agropastoral and the riverine livelihood zones in Middle Shabelle, the *Gu* harvest is expected to start in August. The harvest is expected to be near average. Planted area was above average in these areas. Sorghum, maize, and local rice have all performed well during this season. Many households in the riverine livelihood zone have accessed gravity-powered irrigation this year, and those with pumps were also able to irrigate their farms with river water. Pest infestations were reported in all cropped areas, and the effects of pests are likely to be within the normal ranges for damage as dampness from irrigation and the moderate rains helped control crickets. Overall, sufficient crop production is expected in the region.

Figure 2. Satellite-derived Rainfall Estimate (RFE2), July 1-10, 2012, percent of long-term average



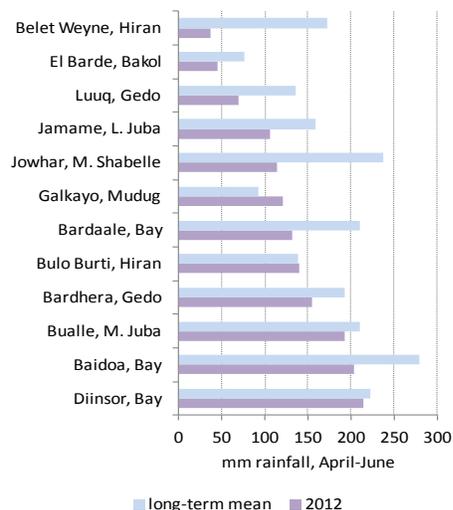
Source: NOAA/CPC/FEWS NET

Note: Areas that received *Karan* rains in early July are circled.

In Lower Shabelle, a below average harvest is expected in August. Maize and sorghum were dry-planted during March in rainfed, agropastoral areas and in riverine areas of Qoryooley, Afgoye, parts of Wanla Weyne, and southern Baraawe. In the rest of the region, the cropped land was planted late because of anticipated harvest shortfall in agropastoral areas and to follow the normal *Hagaa* seasonal planting pattern in June. Therefore, in these areas, the harvest is not expected before September. Based on FSNAU field reports, Irrigated maize in the riverine areas along the Shabelle River is at the vegetative stage with relatively good performance thus far. However, the standing maize and sorghum crop will depend on the performance of *Hagaa* rains during July and August as well as the continued availability of river water for pump irrigation.

In most agropastoral areas of Bay and Bakol, below average *Gu* crop production is expected, according to FSNAU field reports. Cricket infestations coupled with the below average rains during crop establishment stage have led to poor crop prospects. However, localized pockets in all districts may have average production. In Bay agropastoral high-potential livelihood zone, replanting has taken place after the rains resumed during the third and fourth weeks of May, primarily with maize and secondarily with sesame and cowpea. However, poor rains with dry intervals in June retarded crop establishment. Signs of moisture stress such as drooping leaves have been observed. In Bakol, the sorghum crop in the western parts of the region wilted before reaching the establishment stage. In the eastern part of Bakol, average crop establishment was observed. However, if the current, poorly spatially distributed, and erratic rains persist throughout July, a below average *Gu* crop will be likely in all of Bakol.

Figure 3. Monthly rainfall readings from weather stations, April to June



Source: Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM)/FSNAU/FEWS NET

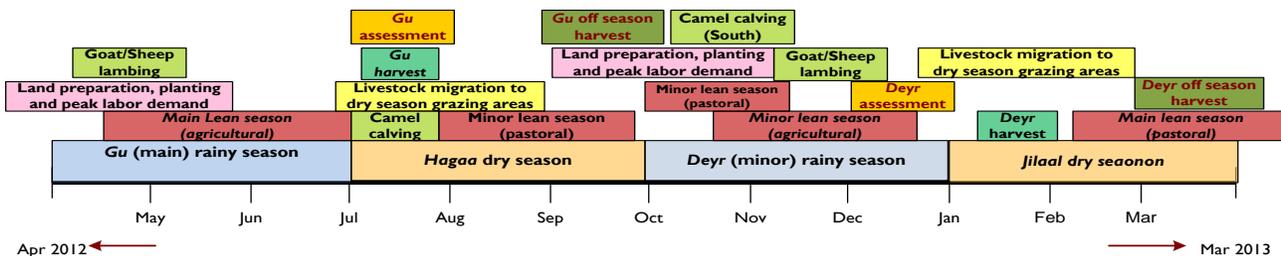
The FSNAU field reports indicate that in Gedo, poor crop performance in all agropastoral areas is likely due to cricket infestations and the poor rains with long dry intervals during May and June. Due to high crop losses in Bardhera district, low cereal production is expected. In the riverine areas of Bardhera District, field report indicate that households have increased the area planted with maize after relief agencies offered tractor rentals and water pumping services. The maize crop in this area is at the establishment stage, and it is performing well as there have been minimal cricket infestations observed. In Middle Juba, field reports indicate that the maize crop has performed normally in riverine areas of Buale and Sakow districts. In the southern agropastoral livelihood zone in Middle Juba, an average harvest is expected though dependent on continuing, regular *Hagaa* rains. In Middle and Lower Juba regions, the use of tractors and of water pumps increased both the crop performance and the area planted. However, in Jilib, Jamame, and Kismayo districts' rainfed farms along the riverine areas, fields have been damaged by moisture stress, and many fields have not been replanted after losses. Crops in the flood-recession areas along the Juba River have performed normally, and they are at the seedling stage. Some agropastoralists have engaged in flood recession cultivation in the *dhashek wamo* (swamps) in Afmadow, Jamame, and Kismayo districts. The standing crop in the *dhashek wamo* is at the vegetative stage, but this crop's prospects remain to be determined by *Hagaa* rain performance in August. In agropastoral areas of Lower Juba, crop failure is expected due to extreme moisture stress.

Livestock performance

Due to significant pasture regeneration and improved water conditions in most pastoral areas, livestock body improved to average. Exceptions are found in the entirety of the Coastal *Deeh* livelihood zone and in Guban pastoral livelihood zone of the Northwest which has not had rain for the past two December to February *Hays* seasons, the only rainy season in the livelihood zone. Medium to high kidding and lambing were reported in all pastoral and agropastoral livelihoods with the exception of Guban pastoral where limited animal births had been reported. Medium to low camel calving rate were reported in most pastoral livelihood zones of the North and the central regions while low rate were observed in the South due to a medium to high conception rate during the October 2011 to January 2012 *Deyr*. Normal migration patterns are observable in most of the pastoral areas. However, due to the scarcity of pasture and water, migration options are largely

limited in Guban pastoral as neighboring Shinile zone of Somali Region in Ethiopia and Ali Sabieh zone in Djibouti also have relatively poor pasture availability and relatively scarce water resources.

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET Somalia