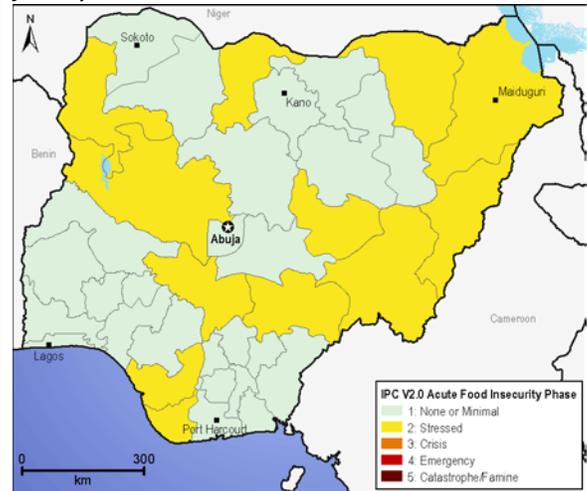


Civil insecurity and floods will cause food insecurity levels to increase

KEY MESSAGES

- Several months after widespread flooding caused substantial population displacement and significant crop damage, flood-affected households have yet to fully recover their livelihoods. Below-average household food stocks and income levels, coupled with high food prices, will cause food insecurity levels to increase in the coming months. Areas hardest hit by the flooding, such as the states along the Niger and Benue Rivers, will experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity from now through June.
- Civil insecurity relating to the Boko Haram conflict is continuing, particularly in Borno, Kano and Yobe states, displacing households and limiting crop production, market, and trade activities in conflict-affected areas. In Borno and Yobe states - the epicenter of the civil insecurity - Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity conditions will be present from January to March before evolving into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) conditions between April to June.
- The prices of major staple cereals, such as sorghum, maize, and millet, have remained above last year's prices and their respective five-year average levels. Given below-average household and market food supplies due to flooding and civil insecurity and increasing demand for staple crops, prices are expected to increase at a faster rate than normal during the next six months, particularly starting in March.

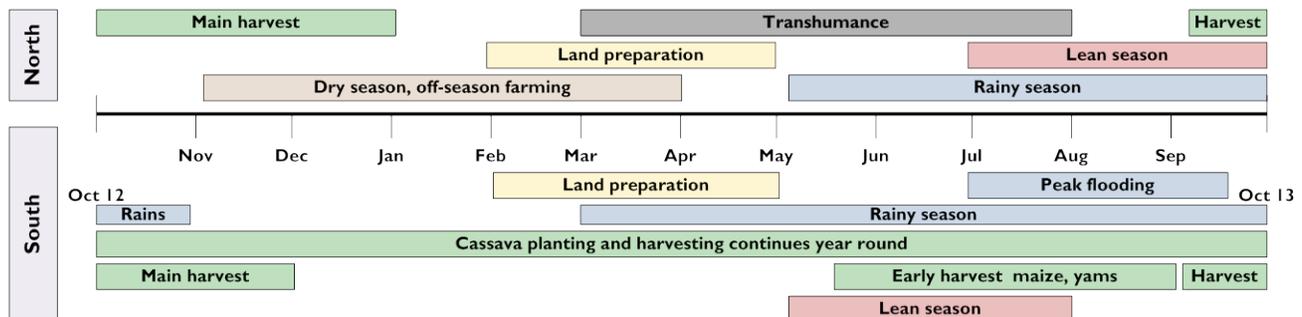
Figure 1 Current food security outcomes for January 2013



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/IPC for more on this scale.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

Due to heavy rainfall and the release of water from several dams, Nigeria experienced unusually widespread flooding from July to October. At the peak of the flooding, about 2.8 million people were displaced, particularly in areas along the Niger and Benue Rivers. Since then, most households have returned to their homes and have started rebuilding their livelihoods.

Before the floods, national crop production levels (including cereals and tubers) were forecasted to be about two percent higher than 2011 levels (a bumper year) and about six percent higher than the five-year average. However, the significant crop damage due to the floods eroded these good prospects, and instead crop production is expected to be below-average with maize, yam, and cassava crops suffering the greatest damage. Crop production and losses figures by the Ministry of Agriculture, National Agricultural Research and Extension Services, and State Agricultural Services suggest that national production of maize, yams, and cassava was down approximately 10, 13 and nine percent compared to last year and four, nine, and five percent compared to the five-year average, respectively.

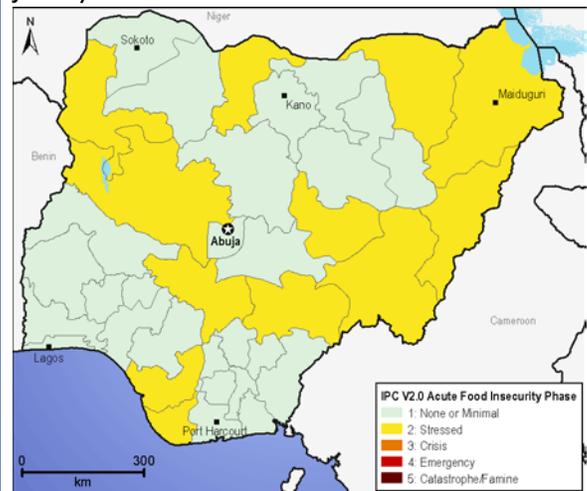
In addition to crop damage, last year's floods disrupted other household livelihood activities and income sources, making it more difficult for affected households to generate cash income to purchase food on the market. For example, over 1.2 million shoats, 3.7 million poultry, and 136,972 cattle were killed during the floods which has negatively impacted livestock incomes. In addition, 242,522 fishing households reported fishing production losses valued at NGN245,244,960. Damage incurred to irrigation systems, dams, and fishing ridges have also negatively impacted ongoing dry season activities (irrigated agriculture and fishing). Finally, flood-related damage to transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, etc.) has disrupted food flows and has increased transportation costs.

Civil insecurity relating to Boko Haram is continuing in northern areas, with Borno, Yobe, and Kano states being worst affected. There have also been localized, Boko Haram-related attacks in Adamawa, Taraba, Gombe, and Bauchi states. During the FY2012, about 1,510 people were killed by Boko Haram-related attacks and 205 bombings were recorded. This violence has continued to displace populations and is disrupting normal market and trade functions. For example, security checkpoints on roads, new rules such as curfews and limits on vehicle types in certain areas, and fear by traders and residents to attend markets are leading to reduced market activity levels in the north. In the south, kidnappings unrelated to Boko Haram have also continued, with 516 people kidnapped in 2012. This threatens oil trade and production activities and has reduced oil-related labor employment opportunities.

Transportation costs are currently high relative to last year due to the civil insecurity in the north and increasing fuel prices. While the official price of fuel is set at NGN97/liter, unofficial rates in December ranged from NGN110/liter in Abuja and Ibadan to NGN130/liter in Kano. This represents a 29 to 80 percent price increase compared to the five-year average. These high transportation costs are reducing commercial and trade activities and are a contributing to higher food prices.

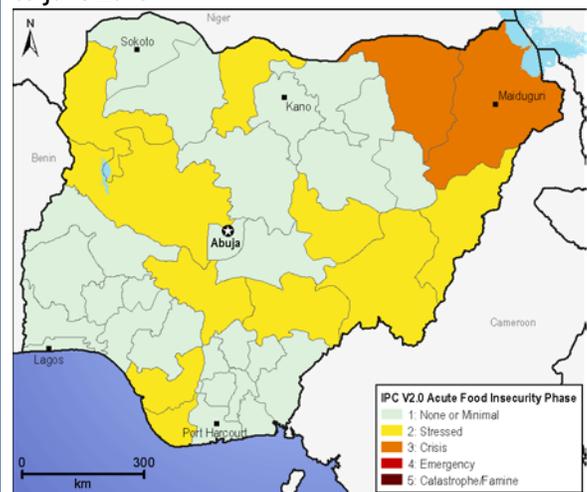
For this time of the year, food stocks are generally below-average. For households, these low stock levels are due to the flood-related crop damage and in the extreme northeast, conflict-related population displacement. Commercial stocks are

Figure 2. Projected food security outcomes, January to March 2013



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 3. Projected food security outcomes, April to June 2013



Source: FEWS NET

These maps represent acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and do not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/IPC for more on this scale.

also low due to traders having trouble getting access to cash. Generally, traders finance much of their trade activities from own crop sales. However, below-average incomes from crop sales have limited this source of cash. In addition, bank reforms are still ongoing which have limited access to bank loans. As a result, a lack of liquidity has meant that traders are having trouble restocking their depleted reserves.

Similarly, industrial and institutional purchases, which normally occur between December and February, have so far been below-normal and have had a minimal impact on food prices in surplus-producing areas. Industrial demand for maize and sorghum has been low due to below-average demand from the poultry and malting industries. During a normal year, a large share of Nigeria's maize production (approximately 30 percent) is consumed as animal feed with a large share of this going to poultry farms. However, high feed prices have caused a sizable share of poultry farms to shut down or reduce production, which has reduced industrial demand for maize. In areas visited during a recent assessment, traders and government institutions stated that they were unaware of any ongoing calls for institutional purchases, despite this being the normal time of the year for these types of purchases.

The [National Bureau of Statistics \(NBS\)](#)'s Composite Food Index (calculated for a basket of foodstuffs) rose one percent from November to December and 10.2 percent compared to December 2011, suggesting a general increase in food prices in Nigeria over the past year. With the exception of Illela, December millet prices at markets monitored in both northern, surplus-cereal production areas and southern, deficit-cereal production areas have been similar to or above last year's levels (zero to 33 percent) but higher than the five-year average (11 to 67 percent). For sorghum, prices in surplus production areas in December were generally below last year's levels while in deficit production areas, prices were above last year's levels. However, prices for both areas are still above the five-year average. For example, December sorghum prices were 18.3 percent above last year and 31.4 percent above the five-year average at the Bodija market in Ibadan (a deficit production area). At the Dandume market in Katsina state (a surplus production area), sorghum prices were 25.7 percent below last year's levels but 23.2 percent above the five-year average. Despite relatively good supply at markets, high transportation costs, civil insecurity at markets in the extreme north and demand from households with below-average crop production, are contributing to high prices at many markets. For sorghum at surplus producing areas, supply has become sufficient to offset demand, causing prices to decline.

In West Africa, Nigeria is an important exporter of staple cereals for the region. However given reduced maize production levels in Nigeria this year, traders from both Niger and Nigeria are crossing over to Malanville, Benin to procure maize, which is an atypical trade flow for this time of the year.

In most parts of the country, the above-average rainfall this season has led to good pasture and water availability and has contributed to good livestock body conditions. In addition, there is seasonally normal, increased levels of livestock demand as agro-pastoralists are replenishing their herds. Livestock prices and cereal/livestock terms of trade are currently favorable to pastoralists. For example, an average goat on Gujungu market, Jigawa state, sold for NGN8,000/head in mid-January, which is 25 and 50 percent higher than levels in November and October, respectively. Compared to December, livestock prices have been stable.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario during January to June 2013 period is based on the following assumptions:

- **Flood victims:** Flood victims still living in camps are expected to return to their homes before the onset of the main season (April through June) to engage in farming activities. Many of these displaced households will also engage in dry season activities (irrigated agriculture and fishing) to increase their income and food stock levels, and improve their access to food.
- **Humanitarian assistance:** Flood-affected households will receive minimal, short-term food and non food assistance from the government and NGOs throughout the scenario period.
- **Household food stocks and access:** Poor household food reserves will deplete two to three months earlier than normal in flood and conflict affected areas. Stocks will be depleted in February/March (compared to May normally) in the south and in April/May (compared to July normally) in the north. As a result, households will resort to market food purchases unseasonably early. In areas not affected by flooding or conflict, food stock levels will be average to above-average due to favorable climatic conditions during the last season.

- **Dry season activities:** Irrigation and fishing activities will continue along major floodplains. Since flooding destroyed infrastructure (irrigation systems, fishing ridges, etc.) and caused soil erosion, less land was put under cultivation and many households were unable to fish normally. As a result, output from dry season activities is expected to be below-average. Dry season harvests will occur in April.
- **Land preparation/sowing:** Land preparation activities will begin normally in February and will continue through May. Sowing will follow from March through June depending on the area. Both of these activities will increase labor opportunities and income levels for poor households. However due to the flood damage, physical availability and economic access to inputs will be limited, reducing next season's production levels in flood-affected areas.
- **Upcoming rainy season:** The onset of the next rainy season will be normal with rains starting in March in the south and in May/June in the north.
- **Green harvests in the south:** The early green harvest of yams and maize in the south will begin in May/June as normal, slightly tempering lean season food shortages.
- **Fuel prices:** High unofficial fuel prices will persist throughout the scenario period, causing transportation costs to be elevated. Status quo fuel subsidy levels are assumed.
- **Industrial/institutional food demand:** Demand from agro-based industries and institutions is currently low due to reduced cash availability for traders and low industrial demand for maize and sorghum from poultry and malting industries. Over the next six months, industrial demand for maize will start to increase although demand levels are not expected to reach 2005 levels.
- **Household food demand:** Household demand for cereals will increase during the scenario period as household food stocks deplete. Given the significant crop damage to tubers, households in the south (where tubers are consumed year-round) are expected to substitute cereals for tubers during the next six months, increasing the south's cereal demand. In northern Nigeria, households normally increase their consumption of tubers and decrease their consumption of cereals during the lean season. However due to the significant tuber crop damage, household demand for cereals is expected to be above-normal during this period.
- **Food prices:** Increasing demand from industries and households and low market supply will cause prices to increase during the upcoming months. During the April to June period, an atypically large share of the population will be dependent on market purchases, causing food prices to increase at a faster rate than normal. Prices will be similar to or exceed last year's prices for many staple commodities.
- **Transhumance movements:** Livestock movements towards the south will begin normally in March and will continue through June.
- **Livestock prices:** Livestock prices will follow normal, seasonal trends. Livestock prices will be stable between January and April due to good pastoral resource availability and livestock body conditions, as well as slightly increased demand from agro-pastoralists who are restocking their herds. However by May/June, pasture and water resources will deplete and livestock body condition will depreciate. Near the end of the Outlook period, pastoralists will sell more animals to access food (increasing market supply) and households will reduce their demand for small ruminants due to low cash income availability as the lean season begins. These factors will also contribute to declining livestock prices in May and June.
- **Civil insecurity/kidnappings:** Civil insecurity related to Boko Haram, as well as unrelated kidnappings in the south, will persist at status quo levels from January through June. This civil insecurity will continue to restrict market and trade activities, especially in northern areas.
- **Cross border trade:** Nigerian exports of staple food products will be below-average due to the impacts of the floods. The flood damage will cause Nigerian traders to import increased levels of maize from Benin during the entire Outlook period. Cereal imports from other countries, such as Niger, Burkina Faso, and Chad, will also increase to atypical levels, particularly between April and June, when food stocks within Nigeria will be low.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

In areas not affected by flooding and/or conflict, households will face Minimal/None (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity conditions through June. In these areas, most households will rely on their own food stocks until April and will then be able to use normal livelihood strategies (ex. casual labor and livestock, cash crop, craft, and firewood sales) to meet essential food and nonfood needs on the market without adopting atypical coping strategies. Exceptions are households in conflict and flood affected areas whose income and food sources have been disrupted. These households will become market dependent two to three months earlier than normal, and will have trouble purchasing food on the market due to increasing and above-average food prices. These households will use atypical coping strategies, such as increased sales of small ruminants and firewood, intense labor work, and/or indebtedness, to various degrees to meet essential food and nonfood

needs. In flood-affected areas, households will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity levels during the next six months. In the extreme northeast where civil insecurity and poor market functioning has been ongoing for over a year, households have a lower ability to cope with hazards compared with other areas of the country. For this reason, poor households will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) conditions between now and March, before evolving into Crisis (IPC Phase 3) conditions between April and June. Beyond June, food insecurity conditions will most likely continue to decline through the end of the lean season.

AREAS OF CONCERN

NE millet and cowpeas livelihood zone in the extreme northern parts of Borno and Yobe states

Current Situation

Over the past year, civil insecurity relating to Boko Haram has been increasing in both urban and rural areas of the Borno and Yobe states (the epicenter of this conflict). According to the Council on Foreign Relations' [Nigeria Security Tracker](#), 220 deaths occurred in Yobe and 327 deaths in Borno between August 31 and November 30, 2012. This compares to 154 deaths in Yobe and 42 deaths in Borno during the same time period in 2011. As this violence persists, population displacements are continuing although exact IDP numbers are unknown.

According to FEWS NET enumerators, many rural households have abandoned their farms to move to safer areas. This displacement has meant that many farms were not cultivated last year and has caused staple cereal production, including millet, sorghum and maize, to be below average. As a result, household food stocks are unusually low for this time of the year.

Curfews and bans on motorcycle taxis have been imposed at major urban areas, reducing population movements within the zone. At the Maiduguri market, a temporary ban on trailers with a capacity of over one ton has been implemented. Additional security checkpoints that require vehicles to be unloaded are also causing long delays and increasing transportation costs. All of these security measures, as well as concerns by traders and residents about their safety at markets in the region, has reduced trader food stocks, trade flows, and market functioning.

Food prices remain at stable but high levels in the zone. In addition to the national-level factors discussed earlier that are leading to high food prices, reduced production levels and limited market and trade functioning in Borno and Yobe states are contributing to above-normal prices. Prices for millet and maize ranged between N6,280/100Kg to N7,330/100Kg on Monday market, in Maiduguri in late December, which is a 15 to 20 percent increase relative to last year at this time and a 30 to 35 percent increase relative to the five-year average.

Localized flooding during the July to October period occurred in this zone, although damage and population displacements were less extensive than in many other regions of Nigeria. Through the Ministry of Agriculture, the federal government has allocated 750 tons of assorted cereal grains per state for flood victims in Borno and Yobe with distribution of this assistance beginning in late January. Due to concerns that IDP camps would become the target of Boko Haram attacks, no camps have been created to house people displaced by the violence. Instead most IDPs are staying with friends or family, which has limited food assistance distribution to conflict-displaced households.

Similar to other agricultural areas of Nigeria, dry season cultivation (rice, cowpea, and vegetables) are ongoing for households not displaced by conflict. In addition to being a source of income and food for agricultural households, these activities also creates relatively high but seasonally normal levels of agricultural labor demand. However, reports from Geidam, Gashua, and Baga indicate that the land area put under cultivation for cowpeas, vegetables, and wheat was slightly lower than average due to the impact of localized flooding in the area, causing production in these localized areas to be below-normal. Given good water levels in rivers and ponds, fishing activities are underway with the catch being above-normal.

According to the UNICEF November situation report, GAM levels were 10.6 and 10.2 percent in Borno and Yobe states, respectively. These rates are somewhat lower than the GAM rates reported in UNICEF's February 2012 report (13.8 percent

in Borno and 14.5 percent in Yobe) but show a relatively large increase relative to the 5.1 and 7.5 percent rates reported two years ago for Borno and Yobe states, respectively, in December 2010.

Assumptions

Due to the difficulty of collecting information and data from this conflict zone, this most likely scenario as outlined below is based on limited information from government and FEWS NET field enumerators. The assumptions used in this scenario are the following:

- **Upcoming cropping season:** Land preparation activities for the main agricultural season will occur between February and May. Below-average amounts of land will be put under cultivation due to conflict.
- **Household food stocks:** For households not impacted by either flooding or conflict, food stocks will be at relatively normal levels. However for households who experienced flood-related crop damage, food stocks will be exhausted two months earlier than normal meaning that rather than food stocks lasting a normal five to six months, food stocks will last three to four months only. These households will resort to markets earlier than normal (April/May) to access food at relatively high prices. Displaced households will have no food stocks and will be market dependent during the entire outlook period.
- **Labor migration:** The timing of labor migration to regional urban centers, such as Maiduguri, Damaturu, and Potiskum, for petty trading, construction work and other unskilled jobs will begin normally in January and will peak in March/April. However, labor migration will be below normal due to the persisting conflict in destination areas.
- **Labor demand:** Due to dry season and land preparation activities for the upcoming season, labor opportunities and household income levels will increase between January and May relative to previous months in areas less impacted by conflict. Planting activities for the next season will begin in June, causing labor demand to further increase. However in areas of the zone that have been hardest hit by conflict, labor demand during the entire outlook period will be below-average.
- **Staple food prices:** Due to the combined effects of persisting civil insecurity, flooding, and high transportation costs, food prices will increase during the outlook period, especially during the March to June period. Prices are expected to reach levels that exceed both last year and the five-year average.
- **Conflict:** Civil insecurity related to Boko Haram will continue to escalate throughout the scenario period. Population displacements within Borno and Yobe, as well as to neighboring states, will continue at status quo levels.
- **Humanitarian assistance:** The federal government begun distribution of 1,500 tons of assorted food stuffs to the flood-displaced poor households in Borno and Yobe states in late January. The usual nutritional support for children below age five by UNICEF and other agencies in endemic areas are expected to continue throughout the scenario period, reducing malnutrition rates in the area.
- **Atypical coping strategies:** Due to the limited and untargeted food distribution for conflict-affected households, poor households will resort to atypical levels of indebtedness, intense labor work and sale of firewood to meet their basic food needs between April and June.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Households who were not displaced by conflict will rely on their own crop production until April/May. However, IDPs will be market dependant during the entire outlook period and will face reduced economic access to food due to below-average income opportunities (crop sales, agricultural labor, migration, and petty trade) in the zone. **Due to limited and untargeted food distribution, particularly for conflict-affected households, at least 20 percent of the population will resort to atypical levels of indebtedness, intense labor work, and firewood sales to meet their essential nonfood needs, and will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security conditions from January through March.**

During the April to June period, households' own production will in general be exhausted and households will be market dependant. In addition, atypically high food prices will further limit food access during this period. As conflict in this zone has been ongoing for over a year, households face a reduced ability to cope. At least twenty percent of the population will resort to an accelerated rate of livestock, farmland, and farming tools sales to marginally meet food needs through June. **These households will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security conditions between April to June.**

NC-Niger River Floodplain Rice and Sorghum Livelihood Zone in Part of Niger state

Current Situation

Widespread flooding in July to October affected 231 communities in 14 local governments in Niger State and caused damage to 65,587 houses. At the peak of the flooding, about 16 percent (651,325 people) of the population was displaced and was either living in camps or staying with friends and relatives. While most of the displaced have now returned to their homes, the recovery process has been slow. While early green harvests of maize, yams, cassava, and rice in September (before the most severe flooding occurred) provided many flood-affected households with at least a certain level of food stocks, overall crop production in the zone was poor. According to an FAO-led assessment in October, about 40 percent of land planted in rice, sorghum and millet (the three major crops in the zone) was damaged. Ongoing dry season activities (fishing, rice, and vegetables) have been reduced for two reasons: 1) productive assets such as water pumps, fishing nets, earth dams, and fishing ridges were significantly damaged by the floods, and 2) soil erosion reduced fertility and increased land preparation costs. Infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and dams, were also damaged leading to increased transportation costs and limited food flows in affected areas. In agricultural areas not within the floodplain, the main harvest of cereal staples (maize, rice and sorghum) and cash crops (melons, groundnuts, cowpeas and tree crops) was above normal due to favorable climatic conditions. Localized areas also sustained crop damage, mainly to cowpeas, from insects and weevils.

Most markets are functioning below normal in areas affected by the floods. Most staple food supplies on Minna market, the major market in the state are below normal due to the flood-related production shortfalls. This is compounded by high transportation costs and reduced trader access to cash, which has limited food procurements from other regions.

Food prices are abnormally high in areas affected by flooding and pests attacks. At the Minna market, the price of cowpeas increased 130 percent while the price of millet, sorghum and maize increased 50 percent, 40 percent and 57 percent, respectively, relative to the same time last year. Similarly on the Izom market, sorghum and maize prices increased by about 82 percent and 85 percent, respectively, relative to the same time last year.

During the floods, about 12,021 shoats and 3,263 cattle were killed, and affected pastoralists and agro-pastoralists have not yet fully recovered. However, pastoral resources are high and livestock body conditions are currently normal for this time of the year.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for January to June 2013 is based on the following assumptions:

- **Domestic trade:** Trade between this livelihood zone and other areas of the country will peak in March when demand from traders and industries to replenish their stocks will likely increase slightly. However, trade will remain at below normal levels.
- **Food prices:** Food prices will increase at an unseasonably high rate during the outlook period, and will likely be above last year's levels and the five-year average. This is particularly true for areas of the state most greatly impacted by the flooding.
- **Household food stocks:** For households who experienced crop damage during last year's floods, household food stocks will be exhausted two to three months earlier than normal. Once food stocks are depleted in March/April, these households will rely on market purchases to access food. Food purchases will be at above normal levels due to production shortfalls during the April to June period.
- **Pastoral and water conditions:** Due to last year's high rainfall levels, pastoral conditions are good. In addition, water availability will be prolonged due to high water levels in rivers and streams and will last until May compared to April normally.
- **Transhumance:** Due to restricted access to pastoral resources in some conflict-affected areas of northeastern and north central Nigeria, this livelihood zone will see an above-average livestock population from the north during the March to June period. In addition, these animals will remain longer than normal in this zone due to the good pastoral and water conditions.
- **Labor supply:** Due to the effects of the flooding, above-normal levels of households will engage in intense labor work to earn income to purchase food on the market. This will continue during the entire outlook period with the highest labor supply levels during the April to June period.

- **Labor migration:** Labor migration to urban areas, both within and outside the state, for unskilled jobs will intensify during the next six months. As young adults migrate to urban areas, such as Kano, Lagos and Abuja, for unskilled jobs, remittance levels will increase. These activities will peak during the March to June period.
- **Humanitarian assistance:** The government will continue to provide limited food assistance to flood-displaced households, through the national emergency management agency (NEMA) and the state emergency management agency (SEMA) during the scenario period.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Due to the significant crop damage that occurred in this zone, household food stocks are low. This, coupled with high food prices, will restrict household food access during the next six months. During the entire outlook period, households will be able to minimally meet their food needs but will be unable to meet essential nonfood needs without using atypical coping strategies, such as intense labor work, increased remittance levels, indebtedness, substituting to less preferred foods, and above-normal levels of small ruminant sales. **From now through June, households will therefore face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity conditions.**

NW-Millet, Cowpea, Groundnuts and Cotton Livelihood Zone in Katsina State

Current Situation

Prolonged heavy rains and flooding from July to October led to population displacement, loss of crops, soil erosion, and the destruction of about 10,021 houses. During the peak of the flooding, about 10,536 people were displaced with 1,210 IDPs living within three camps and the rest staying with family and friends. Most of these displaced households have since returned to their homes. Crop damage was substantial and negatively impacted production of cowpeas, groundnuts, millet, and cotton. While the exact number of hectares damaged by the floods is still unknown for this zone, reports indicate that approximately 515 farmsteads experienced flood-related crop damage. In addition, this zone also suffered considerable crop damage this year from pests (insects and weevils) and high humidity, which reduced both the quantity and quality of the 2012 production.

Similar to other regions of the country, dry season activities are currently underway. However, outputs are expected to be below average due to soil erosion and damage to irrigation and fishing facilities.

Government, corporate organizations, and wealthy individuals have provided limited and short term food and non-food assistance to the flood-affected population. Presently, national security stocks contain about 1,200 tons of sorghum and millet in the state. Similarly, the state government has in stock about 2,980 tons of maize, millet and sorghum. This is in anticipation of increased levels of acute food security in the upcoming months due to the effects of last year's floods and heavy rainfall.

The recent main harvest has resulted in below normal household food stocks. Food stocks, which normally last five to six months, will be exhausted two to three months earlier than usual causing households to resort to market purchases for a longer period than normal. Similarly, market food supplies and trader stocks are also lower than normal. This is caused by poor crop production this year and low levels of carryover stock from last year due to a prolonged dry spell in the area.

Several market anomalies have been noted at cross-border markets, such as Jibia, in this zone. Similar to other areas of the country, traders in this area are having trouble accessing cash, which is reducing trader demand and market-related labor opportunities and income. In addition, food demand from Niger is lower than usual due to above-average crop production in the Sahel and more favorable price differentials in neighboring countries, such as Benin. Finally, recent civil insecurity in the nearby urban center Kano has caused traders, institutions, and farmers to evade Kano's regional market, Dawanau. This has caused a reduction in trade activities and low market supply.

The prices of major staples in the area – millet, maize and sorghum - are relatively higher than last year's levels and the five-year average. For example at the Jibia market, millet, sorghum and maize prices are 67, 50 and 20 percent higher than last year's levels, respectively. Prices for several cash crops, soybeans, groundnut and cotton, are generally within normal levels and are selling for NGN8,500/100Kg, NGN14,800/100Kg and NGN10,000/100Kg, respectively, at the Katsina market. However at the same market, cowpea prices have been steadily increasing over the past three months and now sell for about NGN16,000/100Kg compared to NGN10,000/100Kg at the same time last year.

Due to the poor crop production, households are resorting to intense labor work, firewood sales, and remittances to earn cash income to purchase food. Labor supply from both within and outside the zone is currently above average, causing wages to decline and negatively impacting household income. Labor wages are currently at NGN700/day compared to NGN1000/day last year at the same time. Some households are also sending household members to urban areas, such as Abuja, Lagos and Kano for labor work, which is atypical for this time of the year.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for January to June 2013 is based on the following assumptions:

- **Household food stock:** Households who experienced below-average production during the recent harvest will deplete their food stocks two to three months earlier than normal and will start relying on market purchases starting in May.
- **Food prices:** Food prices in this zone will increase gradually between January and March and will then increase at a faster rate between April and June when most households will access food through market purchases, increasing market demand. Prices are expected to exceed both last year's prices and the five-year average.
- **Transportation costs:** As the fuel scarcity persists, transportation costs will remain at high levels adding to high food prices in the area.
- **Livestock:** Pastoral resources, such as water and pasture, will be above average and prolonged due to high water levels in the area. This will cause transhumants to remain in the zone one to two months longer than normal, increasing milk and meat availability for households.
- **Market functioning:** Due to traders' limited access to funds, procurement of food stuffs from other areas of the country and/or neighboring countries will be below average.
- **Labor supply:** Above average labor supply, from residents of the zone as well as migrants from Niger, during the outlook period will cause labor supply to be above average. This will cause increased competition and wages to remain below-normal.
- **Upcoming main season:** Less land will be put under cultivation in the upcoming main season beginning in May/June as households who lost agricultural assets during the recent growing season will have not yet recovered.
- **Dry season cultivation:** Production of rice, maize and vegetables during the dry season will be below normal, reducing food and income levels in April when dry season harvests normally occur.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Similar to other areas of the country that suffered extensive flood-related crop losses, households in this zone have below average food stocks which will deplete earlier than normal. This, coupled with high food prices, will cause households to have increased difficulties accessing food during the next six months. While households will be able to meet their minimal food needs, households will need to engage in atypical coping strategies, such as above normal levels of small ruminant sales, firewood sales, and indebtedness to meet their essential nonfood needs. **Between January and June 2013, at least 20 percent of the population will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2).**

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table 1: Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National crop damage estimates relating to the floods over-estimated (under-estimated) the extent of the damage Complete deregulation of fuel prices Free distribution of fishing equipment, seeds, fertilizer, and fingerlings by the government to boost dry season production The government facilitates the production of dry season rice with a target of an additional 1.3 million tons of rice this year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household food stock levels will last longer (shorter) than anticipated, and food insecurity conditions will be less (more) prevalent than anticipated Increased transportation costs and food prices, limiting household food access This will boost food production levels, and will increase incomes, food access, and protein intake Increased food supply and access across the country; Reduced levels of rice imports
NE millet and cowpeas livelihood zone (the extreme northern parts of Borno and Yobe states)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government actions reduce Boko Haram conflict in Borno and Yobe states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will improve market, trade, and crop production activities during upcoming cropping seasons; Agricultural and trade-related income opportunities and food access would increase
NC-Niger River Floodplain Rice and Sorghum (Niger state)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outbreak of waterborne diseases, such as cholera and malaria, due to the excessive water availability The civil insecurity in the northeast escalates and expand into this zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will cause a reduction in family labor availability and cash income and will cause an increase in household health-related expenditures. Households would have more difficulties accessing food on the market. This will result in reduced trade activities, below-normal labor opportunities, and a decline in income and food access for poor households.

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes over a six-month period, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes those assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to develop scenarios estimating food security outcomes. Typically, FEWS NET reports the most likely scenario. To learn more about this approach to scenario development, visit www.fews.net/scenario_development.