

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE - October 2015

South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, Sudan

Produced by the South Kordofan and Blue Nile Coordination Unit¹

Overview

Ground fighting in the Blue Nile Ingessana Mountains, and aerial bombardment and shelling in South Kordofan, continued during the reporting period, even if on a smaller scale. Aerial attacks were directed mainly towards civilian locations and cultivated farms. There are increasing reports of SAF attempts to burn crops at the far farms in Dalami county.

With evidence on the ground indicating that both parties are preparing for a new season of fighting, the humanitarian conditions of the people in the Two Areas are expected to deteriorate even further in the coming months. A recent compilation of Nuba reports has documented nearly 4,000 aerial attacks on civilians just the last three years in South Kordofan.²

The international community has to exert maximum pressure on the Parties to sign a cessation of hostilities for humanitarian purposes in the next round of talks, expected to start on 18 November in Addis Ababa, in order to assist the people in need in both government and SPLM/A-N areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

Amidst war, there has been significant drought compounding effects on food security. The September/October Food and Security Monitoring Unit (FSMU) reported warning levels of food insecurity for pockets of people in the Two Areas, as a result of poor harvests due to late and/or scarce rains.³ The areas particularly affected are Chali, Wadaka payam and southern Yabus (Koma Ganza area) in Blue Nile, and some areas of Dalami and As-Sunut counties and the area of Kao-War-ni-Nyaro (south-eastern Jebel) in South Kordofan. The last six years of war, loss of access to land and livestock, depleted coping mechanisms and increasing market prices, not least due to targeted attacks on traders who would otherwise supply markets, has resulted in catastrophic conditions for residents, internally displaced and refugees forced to South Sudan and Ethiopia.

In Blue Nile, an estimated 30,000 people are in desperate need of emergency assistance in drought-stricken Wadaka and Chali payams of Kurmuk county. Around 9,000-10,000 people in the Koma Ganza area of southern Yabus are also living in critical conditions due to the lack of rainfall, as previously reported by the CU.⁴ As the long-term harvest is expected to fail, these people will require emergency food assistance through to February 2016 with a high possibility of additional assistance required to October 2016, to avoid the risk of famine.⁵

In South Kordofan state, while conditions have improved somewhat through September/October, there is still cause for concern as farmers have been forced to replant crops multiple times as a result of recurrent dry periods. An estimated 15,000 IDPs in Dalami county are immediately in

¹ The SKBN CU works with local civil society organisations and international humanitarian actors to share credible information on humanitarian needs in the two conflict-affected states. In this update, the main sources of information are civilians involved in local humanitarian monitoring and protection activities, local civil administration representatives, and the reporting of other civil society organizations.

² [The Atavist Magazine's interactive map](https://read.ata-ivist.com/the-doctor). See also the story told by Dr Tom Catena at <https://read.ata-ivist.com/the-doctor>

³ The FSMU is an independent INGO monitoring food security levels in South Kordofan and Blue Nile SPLM/A-N held areas, through trained local monitors. The FSMU reports are available upon request.

⁴ SKBNCU Flash update, 17 August 2015, Hunger in Warni-Kau (South Kordofan) and Koma Ganza (Blue Nile)

⁵ FSMU September/October 2015: Food security monitoring in Blue Nile, central South Kordofan and Western Jebel region

need of assistance as a result of local crop failures. **Since very limited rainfall occurred throughout October, it is predicted that the majority of households in all of Dalami county will require assistance from January 2016 as the farm crops will fail.** Around 75,000 people are believed to live in the SPLM/A-N controlled areas in the county. Prospects for the December/February harvest suggest that additional assistance in other areas of South Kordofan may also be required.⁶ That include Heiban, Thobo, Um Durein, As-Sunut and Kao-Warni-Nyaro.

The poor harvest conditions in the Two Areas is mirrored in other parts of Sudan. Delayed and poor rainfall were also reported in a number of Sudanese regions during this year's rainy season. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this may lead to a significant decrease of yields in the November-January harvest period in North Darfur, South Darfur and Central Darfur, as well as Hamashkoreeb locality in eastern Sudan's Kassala state. According to a FAO survey, the 25-80 percent reduction in rainfall coupled with a delayed planting period may lead to a 30-50 percent crop loss. The full impact of a low harvest will be felt most acutely during the traditional lean season between March and June next year. This could increase food insecurity in affected localities, especially among small-scale farmers and pastoralists who make up the bulk of Sudan's rural poor.

Prohibited access to replenish health supplies and provide vaccination has resulted in a country-wide increase in measles cases. According to the UN Children's Agency (UNICEF), the number of confirmed measles cases in Sudan this year is almost five times the annual average.⁷ **At least 37 people have died from a reported measles infection in South Kordofan in October alone.** Seventy (70) children under 5 years were infected in Dilling county, and seven (7) have reportedly died. In Al-Abasya and Rashad counties, 30 deaths were reported by the local authorities. In Julud another suspected measles-related child's death was reported, but could not be verified by local authorities. Cases of scabies were reported from Rashad county and other areas in the Eastern Jebel. Medicines and vaccine are urgently needed to contain a possible epidemic. **The CU urgently advises that a vaccination campaign in the Two Areas be prioritised at the upcoming peace talks in Addis Ababa (18 November).**

South Kordofan

A. Protection, Insecurity and Displacement⁸

No ground attacks were reported during the month of October in South Kordofan. However build up of government forces was witnessed in the garrison towns of Habila, Dalami, Talodi and El-Liri. The recruitment of local militias among the Nuba youth by government security organs is ongoing in all counties. The build up of government forces is disrupting the peoples' ability to harvest in farm farms. It also increases the level of localised insecurity. On 28 October, government forces attempted to raid cattle in Tamo village (Abri payam, Dalami county) - 2 km from the front-line. Residents responded to the fire, and four cows were injured in the cross-fire.

Once incident of aerial bombardment occurred in the area during the reporting period. On 8 October, a jet fighters bombed (4 bombs) Nakama village (Alazraq payam, Heiban county), injuring a 25 years old woman, and destroying 4 farms and 4 HHs. On the same day, the government shelled Orang village from Abri in Dalami county, but without any physical damage, according to humanitarian monitors.

In the Western Jebels, government forces shelled civilian locations in three different days from Dilling town. On 4 October, Salara, al-Farshaya and Karko payam (Dilling county) were hit. Around 240 HHs were affected by the shelling and an estimated 98 hectares of forest were des-

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan, [Issue 42 | 12 - 18 October 2015](#)

⁸ The numbers are based on information gathered through the CU Monitors and the National Human Rights Monitoring Organisation (NHRMO), and triangulated. Their reports are available at <http://www.sudanconsortium.org>

troyed. On 10 October the shelling of Shungule (Kalandi payam in Habila county), did not cause any physical damage but fear and disruption of peoples's lives. On 17 October, Kabila payam was shelled, and around 50 hectares of grazing field were set on fire. That is a significant loss for the local communities, who rely heavily on livestock for their economic and social activities.

Specific incidents of violence against civilians in the government side of the Two Areas continue to be reported. In late September 2015, SAF forces attacked and killed three people at cross-line markets, to discourage the sale of commodities to people in the SPLM/A-N held areas. On 13 October, three people from Salara (Dilling county) who were taking an old man to the hospital were detained in Dilling by government security officers. Their present whereabouts are unknown.⁹

Nuba people are victims of continued harassment in the capital Khartoum. A briefing public order trial sentencing ten Nuba Women, was made public by the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) Network. While waiting public transport in Khartoum North on the evening of 25 June 2015, the young women were taken to the Public Order Police station and were arrested under Article 152 of the 1991 Public Order Act on indecent dress. They were wearing trousers. The trials of the ten women began on 28 June and lasted until 16 August. The cases were treated differently, while the majority of women were acquitted, of the Nuba women one was condemned to 20 lashes and fined 500 SDG (around 80 USD) (or a month in jail if she did not pay). One was convicted and fined 500 SDG. Three were fined 50 SDG. The trials were marred with several serious procedural mistakes, according to SIHA. Hala Al Karib, the regional Director of SIHA Network, called the sentencing "one of the many peaks of systemic discrimination Sudanese women had to endure over the past 30 years." She further said that "The silence on the brutality and the dehumanization of women by the Sudanese legal system is becoming unbearable." The case received scant international attention.¹⁰ According to the NGO, this is one among hundreds of trials that often last between 10 to 15 minutes ending with extreme sentencing that could incorporate flogging, fining, imprisonment or all combined happening every day across the country.¹¹

According to the government's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) in Sudan, some 7,000 South Sudanese refugees arrived in El Leri locality (at the border with South Sudan) in mid October.¹² The total number of refugees in the areas is estimated to be around 14,000, camped in the villages of El Leri, Surajia, Gedeid and Greid. According to UNOCHA, the IDPs are in need of food, emergency shelter as well as water and sanitation services. The refugees reportedly received food assistance from the government but have not received any other assistance from aid organizations. According to UNHCR, the total number of South Sudanese arrivals in Sudan as of mid October is 197,942.¹³ With the current rate of influx an estimated 218,500 South Sudanese refugees are expected to arrive in the country by the end of the year. Access to the refugees for humanitarian agencies should be immediately granted by the government Sudan to assist the people in need, in conformity with International Humanitarian and Refugee Law.

⁹ For more information on Human Rights violations in Sudan see the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI), Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of Sudan 2016, September 2015. See also the submission to the European Parliament of two Sudanese civil society representatives at Subcommittee on Human Rights - meeting 22/09/2015.

¹⁰ The Guardian, Outrage as nine Sudanese women face 40 lashes for wearing trousers, 14 July 2015

¹¹ Further information at Third Class Citizens - Women's struggle for equal citizenship in Sudan (2015) and Beyond Trousers: The Public Order Regime and the Human Rights of Women and Girls in Sudan (2009).

¹² Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan, Issue 42 | 12 - 18 October 2015. The Government uses of the term 'locality' corresponds to the term 'county' in SPLM/A-N held areas.

¹³ Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan, Issue 42 | 12 - 18 October 2015

B. Food security¹⁴

According to the independent FSMU, the planting season in all counties of South Kordofan (May-August) has been greatly affected by the late onset of rainfall. In all counties there was a delay to the start of the 2015 rainy season with little or no reported rainfall in May or June. In a normal season, September and October are the expected harvesting periods for maize, short duration sorghum and any groundnuts and vegetables grown in the near farms. These crops mark the end of the lean season as households can consume the crops from the near farms and these crops provide food ahead of the harvesting of the greater far farms in November-February. Harvests from the far farms provide the main source of staple grains and cereals that sustain the household throughout the remainder of the year.

This year, the majority of households have no grain stores remaining from the previous harvest. And the late rainy season has had an effect on the progress of harvesting in all counties. Generally, as of October only maize, short duration sorghum and groundnuts planted in the near farms had been harvested. Households have been forced to replant cereal crops in near and far farms many times due to the high number of crop failures early in the season that were a result of low rainfall. Repeated replanting of seeds is likely to have a detrimental effect on available seed supplies in the next season. The late rainfall has also had an effect on the success of the harvest in the near farms. Some households reportedly gave up after multiple planting failures and focused on the far farms only. These households will be particularly susceptible to food insecurity until the far farms are harvested.

While conditions in South Kordofan improved somewhat with late rains, there is still cause for concern for crops failure in some areas, especially in Dalami and As-sunut counties. Since limited rainfall occurred throughout October, it is predicted that the majority of households in all of Dalami county will require assistance from January 2016 as the far farms will fail, for around 75,000 people. According to FSMU, **all IDP's in Tungule and Sabat payam, who escaped fighting from northern payam in 2014, for over 15,000 people, already require immediate food assistance as a result of the failed harvests in the near farms.** They have no far farmland harvest to wait for and the food security situation is likely to deteriorate into early 2016. Handouts from the host population are reduced with the poor harvest in the current season.

The lean season and hunger gap will also be extended through until December in Heiban, Um Dorein and Toobo County as a result of poor near farm harvests (see Table). There is expected to be a continued increase in the price of grains, as households remain heavily dependent on cereals available in the markets because of the poor near farm harvests. However, the far farms are predicted to produce average yields suggesting there may be some recovery in January 2016. Should heavy rainfall or insecurity prevail in these areas or the yield is less than predicted the situation will be grave.

Table 1. Summary of cereal harvest conditions in South Kordofan

County	Conditions	Payams most affected
Toobo	Below average rainfall in July, August and September. Maize harvest has been both late and poor in all areas. Short duration sorghum (SDS) harvest has been delayed to October and November.	Both maize and sorghum grown at the near farms is low in all but Tabania payam.

¹⁴ This section is based on the FSMU Update on current food security situation in Central Region, South Kordofan, and the FSMU September/October 2015: Food security monitoring in Blue Nile, central South Kordofan and Western Jebel region. It is complemented with information collected through qualitative interviews with humanitarian monitors on the ground.

Um Dorain	Below average rainfall in July, August and September. maize harvests were on time (September and October) but have remained poor as a result of the late rains. Short duration sorghum harvest has been delayed to October and November. Average yields are reported in the majority of payams.	Poor SDS in Saraf and Undulu payams.
Heiban	Rainfall levels recovered to average in August in 4 of 5 payams and above average levels in Al Azarq payam. maize harvests were on time (September and October) but have remained poor as a result of the late rains. Short duration sorghum harvest has been delayed to October and November. Average yields are reported in the majority of payams.	Poor SDS in Heiban and Al Azaraq payams.
Dalami	Rainfall levels considerably below average in all payams with no rainfall in August and no rainfall since early September in all but one payam, Sabat. Maize harvests have been extremely poor with over 75% of households reported to have failed maize harvests. Short duration sorghum harvest is extremely late and only an estimated 10% of households have managed to harvest. Since no sorghum was harvested in October, the crop is declared failed.	75% household report failed maize in Um-Hitan, Abris, Tanguli and Dallami payams. and 50% of households in Sabat. Targeted burning of fields in Deri, Sabat, Mardas and Um Hitan.
L a g a w a and Habila	Reportedly normal, people are harvesting the early crops like sisim, ground nuts and okra and are eating food stocks from last year.	
Habila	Critical as early crop maturity (maize, sorghum, pumpkin, okra, cowpea, tomatoes) has failed due to little rainfall.	Al-farshaya, Karko, Al-Sunut

In Toobo, Um Durain and Heiban counties the late rainfall in August and September has meant that harvesting of cereals in the far farms (sorghum, beans and groundnuts) is expected to begin later (December) than normal. Respondents in these counties reported that crops in the far farms are growing well and normal yields are currently expected. The late but adequate rainfall in August and September has mitigated some of the fears held earlier in the year for the success of far farm crops in these counties. Households continue to rely on the grain stores from the preceding season but these are low and depleting. This is resulting in an increase in the market price of grains in the area. However the success of the far farm harvest will not be known until late January. FSMU and humanitarian actors on the ground are carefully monitoring the situation.

In Dalami county the poor planting and harvesting situation remains serious. It is predicted that **unless there is some late rain, there will be a failure of long duration sorghum, beans and groundnuts in all payams.** At present the majority of households have food stock left thanks to the strong 2014 harvest, but reserves are depleting quickly and people are becoming increasingly reliant on cereals in the markets. Price of sorghum remains lower than last year (5-8 SSP/malwa in August, it was 15 SSP last year) but it is increasing and local authorities expect it to be over 25 SSP by the end of the year. This will reduce the ability of the people to buy food. The presence of food in the market does belie the potential for cash-based interventions in the area.

In the Western Jebels (Habla, Dilling, Lagawa) cereals, vegetables and other produce remain available in all local markets. Households continue to carry out petty trade activities including the selling of local alcohol made from available sorghum harvests (marissa). Trade of livestock remains an important source of income in all areas. With the onset of the rains livestock have returned to grazing areas around the households. There is a supply of milk available from cattle and goats in all areas, despite approximately 50% of recent cattle deaths (predominantly in Um Durain(see Animal Health section). Cross line markets are particularly important in the north and west of central region to sell livestock between Nuba and Arab pastoralists. Prices of livestock

and commodities are considerably higher in cross-line markets, more so as the government has tightened security measures against traders who make the journey into Dallami, Western Kadugli and Western Jebels. In Dallami County particularly, according to FSMU, this will result in insufficient income in households to meet the growing price of cereals and an inability to meet basic household needs.

Due to lack of communication, the CU received no updated report of the **food security situation in Kao-Warni-Nyaro, the south-eastern Jebel**. In the last week of October, however, at least 82 unaccompanied minors (aged 9-15 and 15-18 years), reportedly orphans, reached JamJang payam in Unity state (South Sudan) in search of food. They were assisted by UNCHR and international NGOs. The CU reported critical conditions in south-eastern Jebel since May 2015, and it continues to appeal to provide assistance to the population trapped in the area without access to food (harvest was lost and access to markets is impeded by insecurity).

C. Health

A reported measles infection affected Mandle and Adlan villages in Al-farshaya payam (Dilling county), with 70 diagnosed children under 5 years, and seven (7) deaths. In Julud, a child died of a suspected case of measles. Thirty (30) cases of death due to measles among children were reported also in Al-Abasya and Rashad counties (Eastern Jebel) by the local authorities. There are no laboratories in the area to verify information. **Local authorities and doctors have requested Vitamin A, Benzyl Benzoate, and vaccines to contain a possible epidemic.**

According to the UN Children's Agency (UNICEF), the number of confirmed measles cases in Sudan this year is almost five times the annual average.¹⁵ As of 4 October, the number of confirmed cases reached 3,351, including 71 deaths, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH). The highest number of cases are reported in the states of West Darfur (667), Red Sea (563) and Kassala (533) and the highest number of deaths (23) was reported in North Darfur. 24 cases were confirmed in South Kordofan, while 78 are suspected, and 11 cases in Blue Nile with another 157 suspected. No death was reported in the government-held Two areas.

According to the MoH, US\$5.2 million—\$4 million from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) and \$1.2 million from the Government of Sudan—have been allocated for measles response in 60 localities in the country. The funds will be used to procure 6.8 million doses of vaccines, enough for the vaccination of 5.7 million children between six months and 15 years across 57 high priority localities. The MoH, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF are developing two measles vaccination campaign proposals, one for areas where there is an outbreak and one for priority areas in Blue Nile, West Kordofan, Abyei, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, White Nile and Sennar states. The CU continues to advocate for humanitarian access to assist the children in need in the whole Sudan, including in conflict areas.

Local authorities have reported an epidemic of scabies in the Western and Eastern Jebel. Two cases of death were reported after an assessment was conducted by local humanitarian actors and authorities in the villages of Kernang, Umdura, Kilnger, Sobae and Warish. Local authorities have also reported 15 cases of malnutrition in the area with symptoms such as fever, runny nose, red eyes, mucopopular ulcers, severe malnutrition (Marasmus) pneumonia and conjunctivitis.

According to local monitors, drugs are no longer available in the Western Jebel region. Cases of ear infection, skin disease, and urinary infection in Dilling payam have increased. In Salara one child died of watery diarrhoea. In Habila, the number of people affected by malaria was high in October. In As-Sunut all clinics have closed.

D. Animal Health

According to FSMU, over 50-60% of cattle within Um Durain are reported to have died from disease between May - August 2015. The infection reported came with cattle moving north from Jaw, through Toobo and into Um Dorein. Clinical signs associated with the disease included,

¹⁵ Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan, Issue 42 | 12 - 18 October 2015

lacrimation, nasal discharge, salivation, rough coat and a few cases of diarrhoea. The disease affected predominantly adult cattle. These signs are consistent with malignant Cattarhal Fever (MCF). In Heiban County similar signs were reported but also wounds to the coronet band and to the oral mucosa suggesting a potential outbreak of foot and mouth disease.¹⁶ No diagnostic tests were carried out to confirm the disease. **A livestock assessment, followed by vaccination campaign and provision of medicines, should be immediately conducted, to protect an essential livelihood assets for the local communities**

High livestock losses will result in a reduced availability of milk to households and also the income potential from the animals themselves and their offspring.

Livestock skin disease are also reported by monitors in Lagawa county. Medicines and veterinary clinics are not available in the area. According to local monitors, "cows continue to die and there is nothing we can do".

E. Water and Sanitation

According to humanitarian monitors, a joint assessment on water and sanitation is needed to identify the broken boreholes and water Yards to be maintained.

F. Education

Schools are still closed in South Kordofan until November when the new school year starts, while around 1,657 primary schools children are expected to sit the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in mid November. However students who finished primary level, have no access to secondary schools or vocational training centers.

Lack of qualified teachers, school materials, school feeding, text books and secondary schools remain the greatest challenge to support a quality education in the area. Incentives for teachers, paid by the communities, are very limited.

Blue Nile

A. Protection, Insecurity and Displacement

No bombing or shelling was reported in Blue Nile in the month of October 2015 in Kurmuk county. People from Baw county and northern of Wadaka payam, reported Antonov movements closer to the front-lines. *Since the CU has no access to those areas, the collection of accurate information on events happening in the northern part of the state remains extremely difficult.*

Insecurity levels increased in Maban county (South Sudan), where around 135,000 refugees from Blue Nile are resident in camps.¹⁷ The villages of Dagagi and Chewagi were attacked by SPLA-IO troops on 9 October 2015, forcing around 3,000 refugees to displace into Bunj. The displaced were assisted by UNHCR. The new wave of arrivals stretched the already limited resources available for the refugees. The rations size in the refugee camps has reduced from 15 Kg to 9 Kg sorghum/person/month (around 40%), according to humanitarian monitors in the camps.

Local humanitarian actors reported that women and children from the displaced started moving to Ethiopia, while men remain in the area. This may show that refugees fear that more violence is coming in the next weeks. Relations between the Maban and the Nuer have deteriorated since the beginning of the conflict in South Sudan, with killing on both sides (the Maban people have mostly sided with the Government of South Sudan). The new trend has exacerbated existing tension between the refugees and the host community, based on a struggle over scarcity of land and resources. Three refugees from the Ingeessana tribe were killed in Yousif Batil by the host com-

¹⁶ FSMU Update on current food security situation in Central Region, South Kordofan

¹⁷ <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/country.php?id=251>, accessed on 12 November 2015

munities in October. The increasing intertribal violence and divisions between Maban, Blue Nile and Nuer groups is a dramatic feature of the conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan.

There was no report of new displacements from Baw area to the state capital Damazin, after the unprecedented wave of forced displacements by government forces in April-August 2015. However more displacements are expected following the new wave of ground fighting that took place in the Ingessana Mountains in October 2015. A joint rapid food security assessment was conducted at the end of September among the displaced, with representatives from HAC, the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS), the national NGOs Mobadiroon and El Shabaka Organization and UNOCHA. According to the assessment, some 23,000 IDPs are in need of aid in Blue Niles Ed Damazin, El Roseires and Baw localities.¹⁸ Food insecurity, lack of livelihood opportunities and high food prices were the major concerns. The assessment noted the need for emergency shelter, household supplies and access to schools. WFP started distributing full food rations to the IDPs for three months at the beginning of October. According to UNOCHA, **this food insecurity translates into worsening nutritional status of vulnerable populations, mainly children under five and pregnant and nursing women. A nutrition assessment has been recommended by WFP.** The displaced people said they will remain in these areas until it is safe to go home.¹⁹

B. Food security

According to FSMU, **drought conditions, successive failed planting attempts and high market prices in parts of Kurmuk county indicate potential emergency conditions for at least 30,000 people, who are in need of immediate assistance in Wadaka and Chali payams.**²⁰ Food insecurity levels were already high at the start of the 2015 growing season, with 82.8 percent of the population of Kurmuk county reported to be moderately to severely food insecure in June 2015. Remote sensing imagery for the end of October 2015 provided by FSMU, reinforces the reports of continued poor conditions in Kurmuk. Both NDVI and evapo-transpiration (EtA) suggest conditions in the area remain difficult for farmers. As a result, in addition to the widespread failure of short duration sorghum, prospects for the later, long duration sorghum are also compromised.²¹

Increased rainfalls in October 2015 in all the three payams of Kurmuk county encouraged people to plant the short term and long term sorghum, but farmers are still not sure whether it will mature. In some areas, rain showers have been too heavy resulting in the destruction of short term sorghum, sim sim and beans like *lobia*.

Communities in Wadaka and Chali payams have not harvested anything this season, and are currently eating wild roots to survive, like the locally called Babon, and pumpkin leaves. For those communities, persistently poor conditions suggest little chance to establish a crop from from this point forward. Heavy rains were reported in the last weeks of October, causing floods that destroyed the 75% of crops in the two payams. Rains have now stopped. **At least 30,000 people are in need of emergency food assistance through February 2016, with high possibility of additional assistance required to October 2016.**

In Yabus payam, rainfall was below average in September, after a slight reprieve of normal rains in August. The harvest season has started in most of Yabus payam for short term sorghum, sim-sim and beans, especially from the near farms. The quantity harvested however is limited due to the late rains. The people of Koma Ganza in the southern part of Yabus payam, an estimated 9,000-10,000, were also affected by the lack of rains. Seeds were planted multiple times but

¹⁸ Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan [Issue 41 | 5 - 11 October 2015](#)

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ FSMU September/October 2015: Food security monitoring in Blue Nile, central South Kordofan and Western Jebel region

²¹ Ibid

seedlings repeatedly dried up. People are eating wild roots and hunt in the forest, and are in need of immediate assistance.²²

Four markets are open in Blue Nile, but food is scarce and prices are high. The high exchange rate of the South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) is also responsible for the high prices and 1 SSP was exchanged for 2 Ethiopian Birrs (ETB) (1 SSP for 3 ETB in July 2015). Due to the deflation of the SSP, Ethiopian traders are no longer coming in the area, and in turn fewer commodities are available in the markets. Sugar, coffee, sorghum flour, wheat flour, vegetable oil, soap and salt were scarcely available during the reporting period.

Table 2. Prices in Yabus payam markets (Yabus Bala and Moguf) and in in October 2015

Food item	Unit	Yabus Payam (SSP) (2ETB=1SSP)		Wadaka payam (SSP)
		Oct 2015	Aug 2015	Oct 2015
Sorghum	Malwa	20	23	30
Maize	Malwa	20	23	25
Groundnut	Malwa	60	-	25
Sim Sim	Malwa	75	-	40
Lobia	Malwa	50	-	30
Salt	Malwa	50	50	40
Sugar	KG	50	23	30
Lentils	KG	20	-	-
Soap	PCS	7	8	10
Onion	KG	20	-	50
Coffee	KG	40	38	50
Goat meat	KG	40	38	30
Cow meat	KG	40	34	30
Vegetable	Ratol	20	18	20

Lack of access to food is forcing the people to move within the state, searching for livelihood opportunities in the gold mines and casual labour, especially in Yabus and Wadaka payam. Gold mining remains the major income generating activity in the area. Refugees from both South Sudan and Ethiopia were also seen working in the mines on a temporary basis, as food rations in the camps have been reduced.

C. Health

Health clinics were functioning in Yabus payam in the month of October. Heavy rains however undermined the work of health workers in Wadaka and Chali payams, and reducing the ability of the patients to reach the health centers.

Koma Ganza people are cut off of any medical assistance as the Yabus river is flooded.

²² See 'SKBNCU Flash update #10 - 8 October 2015 Food security crisis in Blue Nile: 30,000 people at risk of a localised famine', for more information

D. Animal Health

Livestock is a vital source to ensure the sustainability of the lives of the people in Blue Nile. In particular, Ingessana and JumJum people in Wadaka herd cows, sheep and goats, while in Chali and Yabus payam people mostly raise goats and few cows. However the number of livestock available is depleting. An increasing number of animals in fact were sold in the markets to provide food for the families, other died because of lack of drugs and vaccines. There is no veterinary centre in the area. **A livestock assessment is urgently needed in the area, and provision of vaccines and medicines should immediately follow.**

E. Water and Sanitation

While water is largely available in the area at this time of the year, its quality is poor in some areas, especially in Koma Ganza and Wadaka, where people drink the water accumulated on the ground.

F. Education

All schools in Blue Nile SPLM/A-N-held territories are closed since last May 2015 for summer. The new school year will start in November. A new school is under construction in Yabus payam, using local material. The need to train teachers in the area remains imperative.

Humanitarian Negotiations on the Two Areas

The African Union High Implementation Panel (AUHIP) called the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A-N for a new round of talks on 18 November 2015 in Addis Ababa. The last round ended with no result in December 2014. The talks will focus on the cessation of hostilities for humanitarian access in the Two Areas.

The CU advocates the international community to assist the Parties in successfully negotiating a humanitarian access in government and SPLM/A-N held areas in the next round of talks. After more than four years of conflict, people's ability to cope is exhausted. That cannot endure another year of violence, aerial bombardment, food scarcity, poor health and lack of education, without further significant displacement, contributing to the global refugee crisis, and loss of life.