

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE - January 2016

South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, Sudan

Produced by the South Kordofan and Blue Nile Coordination Unit¹

Overview

The resumption of ground hostilities followed by a new wave of aerial bombardment, shelling and attacks against civilians, led to a quick deterioration of the security situation in the Two Areas in January 2016. At least 11 people, including a child, were reportedly killed by government militias in South Kordofan.

In Blue Nile, humanitarian monitors reported 18 incidents of bombing. As a result, 3,060 people were displaced in Kurmuk county, 4 people were injured, including 1 child, and 27 farms destroyed. In South Kordofan, government troops build up in Heiban, Talodi and El Abassiya led to a general deterioration of security levels for the population with an increasing number of attacks against civilians by government militias.

Amidst a deterioration of security levels, some people in the Two Areas are having a small respite in their food security situation due to the seasonal harvest of far farms in January. However the **food stocks are expected to last only 2 more months in Blue Nile and 4 in South Kordofan** due to a below average harvest. The most recent Fewsnet report states that “needs will be higher than usual” and more so in areas of South Kordofan already affected by poor rainfall during the past rainy season.² **As of early February Fewsnet raised the Integrated Phase Classification to Emergency 4 for South Kordofan and Blue Nile.** Phase 4 indicates at least 1 in 5 households face extreme food consumption gaps resulting in very high acute malnutrition or excess mortality, or faces extreme loss of livelihood assets that will likely lead to food consumption gaps. Phase 5 is famine. The CU is carefully monitoring the situation.

People in the Two Areas have survived extremely high levels of violence after nearly five years of conflict. Civilians, according to Human Rights Watch, including children, were “*burned alive or blown to pieces after bombs or shells landed on their homes*”, while a large scale of forced displacements occurred in Blue Nile.³

The CU urges the international community and humanitarian actors to push the parties to agree to allow aid to reach the population in the Two Areas.

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. The CU trained monitoring unit can operate only in the SPLA/M-N controlled areas. Lack of access to GoS controlled areas represents a limitation to achieve a comprehensive statewide analysis of the needs of the population in the Two Areas

² [Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan](#), Issue 04 | 18 – 24 January 2016

³ Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2016](#)

South Kordofan

A. Protection, Insecurity and Displacement⁴

As a result of the troops build up in the state, attacks against civilians increased in Al Abbasiya, Alref Alshargy, Dalami, As-Sunut, Dilling and Heiban counties, leading to 11 reported deaths, including a child.

As already reported by the CU, in El Abbasiya county, during the first week of January, members of the government allied Rapid Support Forces (RSF) “*killed six people, raped five women and wounded 17 people*” in the main market on their way to the battlefield.⁵ On 2 January, humanitarian monitors reported attacks by government forces in Sallara payam, Dilling county, during which 1 civilian was injured. On 5 January, in Tessay payam, Alref Alshargy county, RSF carried out a pre-judiciary killing, leaving one adult and one child dead and a woman was abducted. The following day, the government supported Popular Defense Forces (PDF) forces killed a 60 year old man while he was working in his farm in Umhetan payam, Dalami county. On 7 January, in As-Sunut county, Kasha payam, PDF killed one civilian. On 8 January, a man was shot dead in As-Sunut county, on the road between Kasha and Karko payam. According to humanitarian monitors on the ground, PDF are suspected to be behind the killing. Militia attacks were also reported in Habila county, Katang payam, on 12 January where a civilian was killed and his house burned down. On 14 January, again in Tessay payam, PDF shot and injured a woman.

Several incidents of shelling were reported by monitors in Dilling and Habila counties that led to the destruction of farms yet to be harvested. On 1 January, 120 shells were launched from Dilling town on 5 villages, burning 15 farms and a significant number of people lost their harvest (figures not yet confirmed). On 5 January, shelling from Dilling town into Killaya village, Julud payam, killed 6 cows belonging to one household. On the same day, in Habila county, shelling into the villages of Delaiba, Kabilla payam, and Wad Abudhash, Kalandi payam set at least 50 square kilometers of land and 5 houses on fire.

In Lagawa county, tension between the local residents and members of the Malia tribe rose since December 2015. On 14 December, two Malia boys were captured by the local Tulishi community after their camels trampled over one of the farms and destroyed the harvest. A compensation of 50,000 SDG was paid and the boys were released. In retaliation, however, on 8 January, members of the Malia tribe hijacked a tractor with 4 people, asking a ransom of 100,200 SDG. These kinds of incidents are expected to increase with the worsening security situation and increased competition for dwindling food and pasture resources.

Cattle raiding in the state occurred at a much smaller scale than in December 2015. However, it remains impactful as livestock forms the only source of income for some households, after losing most of their farmland due to insecurity, and with minimum coping mechanisms after five years of conflict. On 7 January PDF allegedly looted 19

⁴ 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 [Sudan Consortium](#).

⁵ [RSF kill six in Nuba Mountains](#). Radio Dabanga, 12 January 2016

goats from two households in Tessay payam. On 16 January, in Dilling county, 68 heads of cattle belonging to 3 households were looted from Karkando village by government supported militias. On 24 January, in Alazraq of Heiban county, PDF reportedly looted 22 cows from one household.

B. Food security

In early January, Fewsnets noted:

[...] preliminary crop estimates from the 2015/16 agricultural season suggest national cereal production could be up to 25 percent below the five-year (2009-2013) average, driven by dryness-related reductions in yield and area planted in both surplus-producing and deficit-producing areas, including eastern areas affected by El Niño.⁶

In conflict-affected areas of South Kordofan, food security outcomes are likely to worsen from Crisis (IPC Phase 3) to Emergency (IPC Phase 4) by March 2016 among IDPs and poor residents due to below-average harvests, restricted population movements, restricted trade flow, lack of access to humanitarian assistance, sharp increases of staple food prices, reduced asset holdings due to four years of protracted conflict, and continuing insecurity.

Reduced purchasing power and reduced access to food from own harvests are likely to result in an earlier onset of the lean season in March 2015, with above-average needs in SPLM-N controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile [...].

By early February, Fewsnets raised the Integrated Phase Classification to Emergency 4 for South Kordofan (and Blue Nile).⁷ Phase 4 indicates at least 1 in 5 households face extreme food consumption gaps resulting in very high acute malnutrition or excess mortality, or faces extreme loss of livelihood assets that will likely lead to food consumption gaps. Phase 5 is famine.

While not all areas are affected equally, the harvest is well below normal as a result of poor rainfall early in the season, followed by flooding later on and crop pests. The area will become considerably more stressed as the lean season sets in towards May 2016. There will be an increased dependency on wild foods, a likely increase in hunger as measured through the food insecurity experience scale (FIES)⁸ and a rise in grain prices. To confirm the anticipated stress on the most vulnerable, a nutritional survey is being planned.

⁶ FEWSNet, Sudan Food Security Outlook Update, January 2016

⁷ FEWSNet Food Assistance Outlook Brief, January 2016

⁸ A reminder that independent monitoring reports published in December 2015 noted more than 50% of the population still reports having no food in the house, going to sleep hungry or at worse - going a whole day and night without eating on average 3 days a week. These rates increase to more than 80% of the population in Blue Nile. Crude estimates based on dietary diversity indicate that diet quality is extremely poor, on a scale of 1-12 where 9-12 is acceptable, populations living in South Kordofan score a 2.0 and 2.5 (Central Region and Western Jebels, respectively). While Blue Nile populations fare even worse at 1.7. Households are basically reduced to eating cereals and some vegetable, fruit, meat or milk once or twice a week. Implications on malnutrition, chronic or acute, is self-evident, even in the absence of formal nutritional surveys (CU Report, December 2015)

The recurrent tensions at border markets keep disrupting cross line trade and has further contributed to low supply of goods, coupled with inflation in both Sudan and South Sudan, food and non-food prices have increased. Disruptions have been reported specifically in Central Region the counties of Um Dorein (4 out of 4 markets), Western Kadugli (3 out of 4) and Buram A (3 out of 5). In the Western Jebels, Dilling county, the price of a sack of sorghum is now 350 SDG (57 USD), while it was 320 SDG (55 USD) in December, and 200 SDG (35 USD) in November. This is the equivalent of 16.8SSP/malwa. With the exception of Dilling and Heiban, in general prices appear to be declining with the arrival of new production on the market (Figure 1).

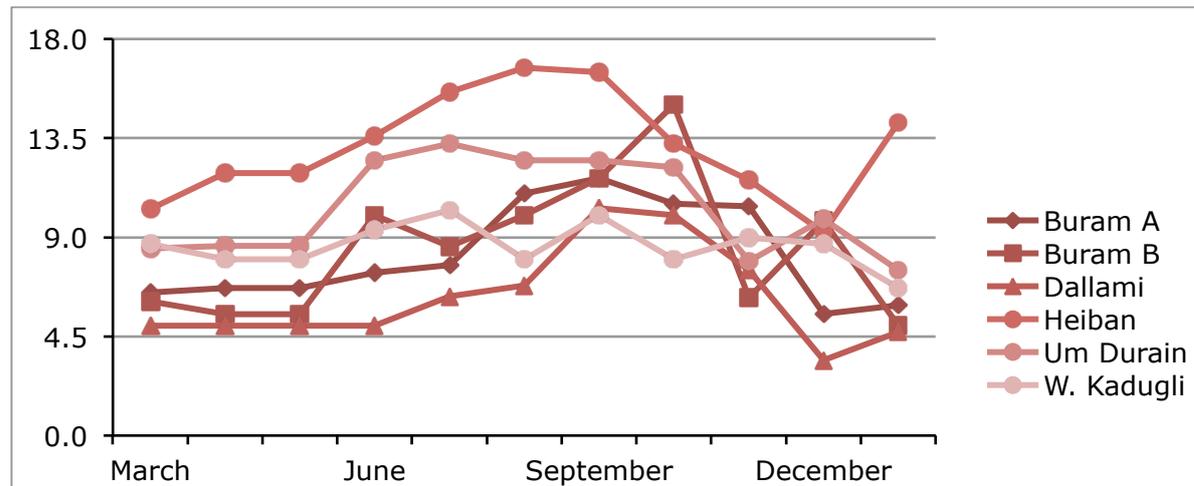


Figure 1: Price of Sorghum SSP/Malwa (Source FSMU Field Data January 2016).

While counties still report insecurity first and drought second as the main shock affecting agriculture, the food security situation has seen a temporary improvement due to the harvesting from far farms in Lagawa, Dilling and Habila counties.⁹ Households and payams report increased income from crop production and reduced begging. However, as previously reported by the SKBNCU (December 2015 report), it is expected that people in these areas will be in need of assistance as early as June, when the harvest is expected to run out. In As-Sunut, the food security situation remains critical as a result of the poor production due to the low rainfall during the last rainy season. These areas remain in urgent need of assistance.

C. Health

Humanitarian monitors on the ground report increased cases of malaria and respiratory diseases, especially amongst children. In the Western Jebels, humanitarian monitors report people are crossing to government areas seeking medication, due to the lack of drugs and functioning medical centres in SPLA/M-N held areas.

The outbreak of dengue has reportedly been stabilized. Up to date, 46 cases have been reported in South Kordofan, with 4 dead.¹⁰ However, the expected effects of El Niño

⁹ FSMU field data, January 2016; Dallami also reports pest infestation.

¹⁰ [Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan](#), Issue 02 | 4 – 10 January 2016

will make these areas, and others in Sudan, especially vulnerable to disease outbreaks and “could further lead to an increase in vector-borne diseases such as malaria and viral hemorrhagic fevers (VHFs)”, as well as lead to an increased occurrence of water-borne diseases such as cholera and other diarrheal diseases, due to the decreased water quantity and quality expected as a result of the El Niño.¹¹

The problem of child vaccination remains, with “the majority of children born in rebel-held areas have not been vaccinated against preventable diseases”.¹²

D. Animal Health

No update to report.

E. Water and Sanitation

Reports from Heiban county warn of water shortages due to pervasive broken boreholes in the area, as a result of the heavy usage they are subject for both human and animal consumption. Due to movement of troops in the area, most cattle owners have been forced to maintain their animals close to populated areas, increasing pressure on scarce water sources.

Problems also persist in isolated Kao-Nyaro-Warni area, Abassiya, Rashad, and Dilling counties, where access to clean water remains a problem.

F. Education

No update to report.

The CU continues to encourage donors and INGOs to provide school materials and assist in training teachers in the war affected areas.

Blue Nile

A. Protection, Insecurity and Displacement

Tension continued escalating throughout January in Blue Nile. Humanitarian monitors on the ground have reported an increase in aerial attacks, with 20 incidents in January. As a result, a child was injured and a significant number of farms were destroyed

On 1 January, 7 farms burnt down after 4 bombs were dropped in an aerial attack in

¹¹ [Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan](#). Issue 04 | 18 – 24 January 2016 and [El Niño and health. Global Overview – January 2016](#).

¹² Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2016](#)

Wadaka payam, Kurmuk county. The following day, humanitarian monitors reported 4 separate aerial bombardments, all in Wadaka payam. As a result, 3 people were injured, 10 houses burnt, and 6 cows killed. On 6 January, as a result of 5 incidents of aerial bombardments against civilians, 2 in Wadaka, 2 in Yabus and 1 in Chali payams, 8 farms were destroyed. Just a day later, an Antonov dropped 2 bombs on Wadaka payam, with no civil or material losses. As already reported by the CU, 'an indiscriminate aerial attack on 9 January on Muguf, Yabus payam, destroyed 500 houses, 1000 mango trees and displaced around 3,000 people. A day later, 6 bombs dropped on the newly displaced forced them to seek refuge in the nearest caves, and forests. 500 hectares of bamboo trees were set on fire.'¹³

Between the 20-22 January, 15 bombs were dropped on 2 villages of Wadaka payam, and 1 of Bau county, leaving 1 child injured, and 5 farms destroyed. Further aerial attacks were reported on 29 January, 1 in Bau and 2 in At-tadamon counties. 10 bombs were dropped leaving 7 farms destroyed.

B. Food Security

Similar to South Kordofan, Fewsnets notes that due to reduced purchasing power and access to food from own harvests [households] are likely to [experience] an earlier onset of the lean season in March 2015, with above-average needs in SPLA/M-N controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile [...].

By early February, Fewsnets already has raised the Integrated Phase Classification to 4 for [...] Blue Nile.¹⁴ There were reports of population movement (1000) toward camps but no reason cited.¹⁵

For the moment, the food security situation in Blue Nile remains relatively stable, compared to last month, as harvesting of far farms is still on-going in the three payams of Kurmuk county; Chali Alfil, Wadaka and Yabus, and it is expected to be completed by next month. The harvest is expected to last until April. As previously reported, the situation remains critical in KomaGanza, south of Yabus payam, and the JumJum area, in Wadaka payam, where harvest is reported to be below average due to low levels of rainfall throughout the rainy season

The reduced number of goods in the four weekly markets in Blue Nile continues to be a problem, as these are only partially functional. Similar to South Kordofan, due to the availability of certain food products from the far-farm harvest, prices have seen a temporary decline in January (see Figure below).

¹³ SKBNCU Flash update #12 – 1-10th January 2016

¹⁴ FEWSNet Food Assistance Outlook Brief, January 2016

¹⁵ FSMU field data January, 2016

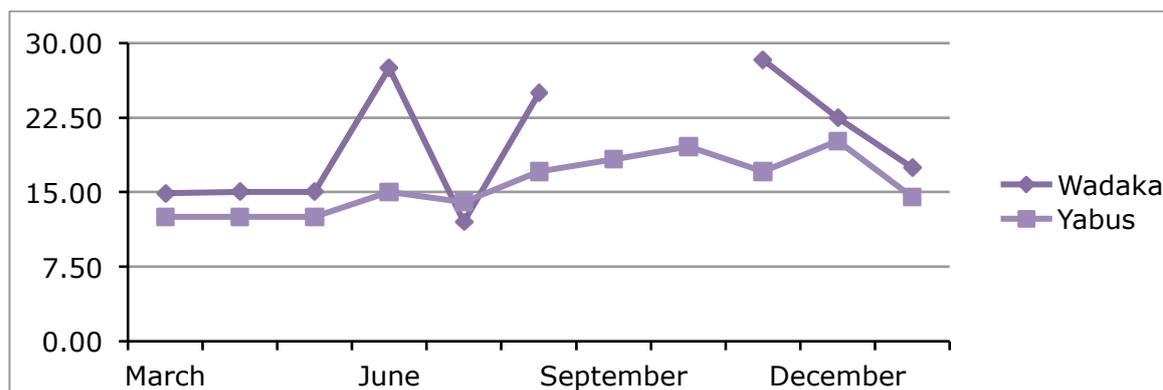


Figure 2: Sorghum prices SSP/Malwa (from FSMU field reports, triangulated with CU monitors)

C. Health

In Wadaka and Yabus payam people have reported health issues after drinking water from the river.

The most common diseases reported during January were eye infection, skin disease, respiratory infection and pneumonia. Additional drugs for leprosy are required.

Vaccination of children remains one of the biggest challenges, since no vaccination campaign has been carried out since the beginning of the war.

As mentioned previously, given the IPC rating has been increased to 4, a nutrition survey should be carried out by an independent agency.

D. Animal Health

No update reported

E. Water and Sanitation

According to humanitarian monitors on the ground, Wadaka payam is one of the most affected areas by lack of water. It has been reported that women walk up to 12 hours to fetch water. This is particularly critical in Jum Jum area, west of Wadaka payam. As a result, people have been seen leaving their home areas to go to Khor Bashum and Alsamah Alardeba to access drinking water.

F. Education

Lack of qualified teachers, school material, and the poor conditions of school facilities, remain a major challenge.

Humanitarian Negotiations on the Two Areas

Political negotiations between the parties under the auspices of African Union Implementation Panel (AUHIP) have not resumed since they stalled in November 2015. The Parties were called for a second round of informal discussions in January 2016 in Berlin, but without achieving any progress. In the absence of a political solution, and in light of increasing humanitarian needs, the need for the parties to open humanitarian corridors and allow access to the people in need in the Two Areas, is paramount.