

SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update

May 2018

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Populations vulnerable to food insecurity

According to the [March-April 2018 Report of the Food Security Monitoring Unit](#) (FSMU), both South Kordofan and Blue Nile populations are vulnerable to a spike in extreme food insecurity similar to the one recorded during the 2017 dry season as only few households have sufficient food stocks to last through the lean season.

Despite the ceasefire and households' increased access to far farms throughout the 2017 agricultural season, food stock positions are at the same level now than they were last year. However, FSMU says in its [March-April Report](#) that "in Blue Nile, where active conflict disrupted the agricultural season, food stock positions were worse in both January and April of 2018 than they had been 12-months earlier."

With a population primarily supported by subsistence farming, those lacking farmland or farming tools are in a particularly vulnerable situation. From interviews with the newly displaced people in Wadaka payam in Blue Nile, who received one-month emergency food rations in April, seeds are among the highest priority items needed. This group of internally displaced people (IDP) have not received any NFIs since they were displaced for the second or third time in late February 2018 after intra-SPLM-N clashes.

From a nutrition survey done end of 2017 by a partner, global acute malnutrition (GAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) are at alert levels: GAM rate at 8.6 per cent (6.4 - 11.5 95% Critical Illness) and SAM 1.1 per cent (0.5 - 2.2 95% C.I.), based on Weight-for-Height/MUAC and the presence of bilateral oedema. Two children with oedema were identified during this survey in Komo Ganza and malnutrition by MUAC was 6.4 per cent (4.5-9.1 95% C.I) and severe malnutrition by MUAC 1.6 per cent (0.9-2.8 95% C.I).

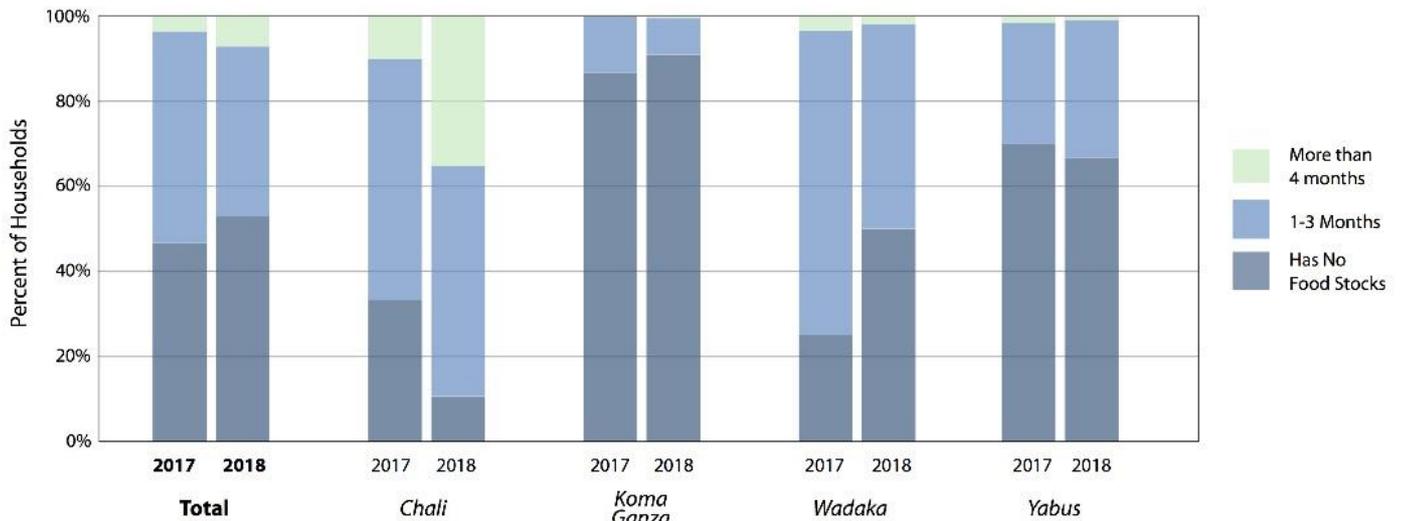
Total stunting was found to be 14.8 per cent (11.0-19.5 95% CI) and severe stunting was 3 per cent (1.5- 6.0 95% CI). Rates like these leads to impaired growth and development of children and has long lasting effects on the resilience of these populations.

On the monitored areas in Blue Nile, the FSMU states in its [March-April Report](#) that "as in April 2017, this year's food stock levels varied greatly between the Southern Kurmuk County payams. In Chali, where no households reported severe food insecurity in April 2018, the proportion of households with food stocks was exceptionally high at 92 per cent. Thirty-five per cent had sufficient stocks to last at least four months, through the end of the lean season, as opposed to just 10 per cent last year. In the other payams, far more households had depleted their food stocks by April 2018, and almost none had enough to last to the next *jibraka* harvest in August.



Highlights

- Food stock levels lower in Blue Nile than in 2017.
- Food prices likely to continue rising due to fuel crisis in Sudan.
- The Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, stressed the need for unhindered humanitarian access, including to areas controlled by non-state armed groups, during his visit to Sudan in May.

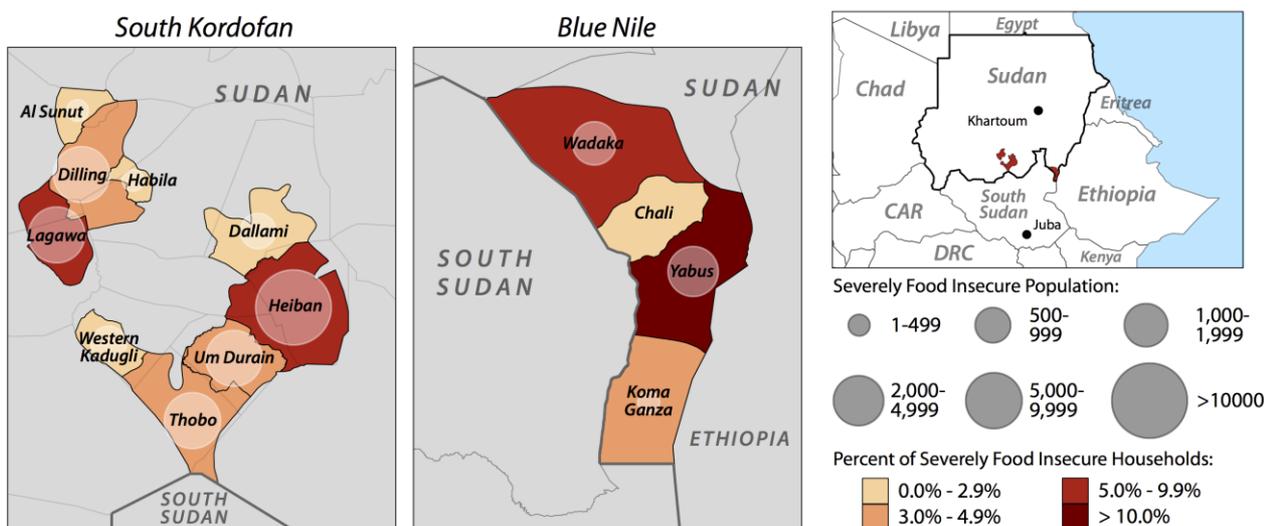


Duration of household food stocks, April 2017 and 2018, Southern Kurmuk County. Source: FSMU Quarterly Report May 2018.

In Wadaka, where many households could not harvest due to conflict, 50 per cent held food stocks, 27 percentage points lower than last April. In Koma Ganza, an alarmingly low 15 per cent of households had any stocks remaining at all. In Yabus, the distribution of food stocks in April 2018 mirrored April 2017, with 37 per cent of the households still holding at least some food stocks. Looking ahead to the next growing season, the rains began in the second *dekad* (11-20) of March and increased through the end of April. Households throughout Southern Kurmuk County reported decreased access to far farms compared to last year at the same time.”

In terms of population movements, UNHCR registered 1,639 new refugee arrivals from Sudan’s Blue Nile region in refugee camps in Maban due to the ongoing political tensions involving SPLA-North and, in the Yida refugee settlement, UNHCR registered 1,350 new refugee arrivals from Southern Kordofan, a slight decrease from 1,945 registered in the month of April. This is partly due to the planting season which started in Southern Kordofan, again underlining the importance of access to farms, keeping families together and children able to attend school in their areas of origin.

Fuel shortages across most parts of Sudan is continuing to impede services, buying power and transportation of food commodities. FEWS NET reports in its [Food Security Outlook April 2018](#) that “fuel shortages across most parts of Sudan has been worsened towards end of March beginning of April 2018, coinciding with the continued high inflation and local currency depreciation following the macro-economic changes in Sudan during January and February 2018. This has led to high transportation cost, which resulted in high prices of food and non-food items across different parts of the country”. This is also echoed in the [FSMU March-April Report](#): “the rapidly increasing price of sugar in South Kordofan suggests that a further deterioration in the Sudanese economy could exert extreme upward pressure on food prices and intensify the already tenuous situation.”



Severely food insecure households and population in need, April 2018. Source: FSMU Quarterly Report May 2018.

HEALTH

Lack of routine immunization puts children at risk

CU monitors report that Komo Ganza communities and parts of Wadaka, where there is a concentration of at least 10,000 IDPs, are already cut off from health services with the rainy season in full swing already.

Large swathes of Southern Kordofan are inadequately covered by health services and the lack of qualified medical staff, no incentives and transport to reach areas are impacting particularly paediatric child care. Routine immunizations are not done, particularly putting children under age 5 at great risk of contagious diseases.

In the Western Jebels, which has an estimated population of 300,000 and an area of 4,219 km², no drugs or vaccinations have been transported yet this year from the central health secretariat (in Southern Kordofan in the SPLM-N liberated area). There has been no immunization campaign carried out in Western Jebels since 2015.

The Sudan Federal Ministry of Health reported that the measles cases registered so far for 2018 already exceeded the number of cases for the whole of 2017. This highlights how vulnerable the populations in the Two Areas are to epidemics without access to regular, routine immunizations.

Cases of onchocerciasis, also known as river blindness, has been reported in Komo Ganza, Blue Nile and further outbreak of diseases are expected this rainy season.

ANIMAL HEALTH

Shortfall of essential drugs and vaccines

There is only community-based veterinary services provided in parts of Southern Kordofan, while no services are provided in Western Jebels and in Blue Nile.

With the rainy season starting, there is still a shortfall reported of essential drugs and vaccines and animal deaths have been reported in the central region of South Kordofan. Livestock continue to be afflicted by disease and were likely affected by the early rains.

More support to the sector is needed, also to prevent the spreading of diseases into the rest of Sudan.



WASH

Access to clean water remains a challenge

Access to clean drinking water remains a challenge in all counties in Southern Kordofan. Access to Western Jebels to transport much needed spare parts for repair of over a third of boreholes is problematic.

EDUCATION

Exams ongoing

Exams are now concluding in Southern Kordofan for primary schools. Students of Western Jebels will have to walk for one week to sit for primary exams in June. Most learners walk two hours every day to attend school in Nuba Mountains, according to the Nuba Mountain Education Assessment Report released April 2018. With only 40 per cent of females in primary and secondary schools, there is gender disparity in access to education. Low enrolment and retention rates are due to a high demand for the girls' services in household chores, early pregnancies and marriages, and lack of sanitary towels.

In Blue Nile, there are only 35 schools in an area of around 5,000 km² and no functioning secondary schools which not only force families to send their children out of the area to attend school, but also could affect boys of potential military stature.

SECURITY

At least eight people killed during cattle raids

A number of cattle raids in the last month were reported in South Kordofan and in one of the most serious incidents reported seven people were killed around Jau. This incident temporarily affected people movements.

There were other significant incidents reported during the month. In Dellami county Abri payam, on 24 May, one person was killed by cattle raiders. On 3 May, 21 cattle were looted in Sabat payam, and on 22 May, 26 goats were looted. In Umdorein county on 17 May, 30 cattle were looted and again on 21 May another 40 cattle were looted. In Thobo county, 50 cattle were looted in Umshoran.

In Blue Nile, free movement of population is reported.

The leadership council of the opposition alliance Sudan Call concluded a meeting on 28 May during which the Constitution was approved and three levels of leadership were adopted. Forthcoming from the meeting is a detailed position to the African Union mediation on the roadmap for peace and democratic transition in the country, stressing its appreciation for the regional and international efforts to end the war. The meeting called on the other opposition groups including the National Consensus Forces, SPLM-N al-Hilu and SLM-Abdel Wahid to "build a broad resistance front," according to media reports.

The unilateral ceasefire has been extended from 1 June to 30 November 2018 by the SPLM-N (Al Hilu).