

SKBN Coordination Unit

Humanitarian Update

December 2019



FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

South Kordofan

Harvests in far farms are ongoing. According to a pre-harvest report from the Secretariat of Agriculture, most traditional farms in the low lands were seriously affected by heavy rain and floods. The most affected counties are; Delami, Thobo, and Western Kadugli.

So far, there are no reports of serious food insecurity. However, with the high influx of returnees in the region, by March 2020 there will be a food gap, if there is no intervention.

Blue Nile

Overall food security improved across Chali, Komo Ganza Wadaka and Yabus payams as far farm harvests continue until February 2020. Even in Wadaka payam, where food insecurity was previously high, there was food stability in December. Crops harvested in this season included; sorghum, ground nuts, luba/ beans and sim sim.

Despite an improvement in food security across Blue Nile, there is still a fear that food stocks will not last for a year because of poor harvests resulting from flood damage to crops. Millipedes and birds also contributed to poor far farm harvests. Farmers, particularly in Komo Ganza and Yabus, left their homes for far farms to scare away the birds that were eating their crops.

As the dry season begins, communities in Wadaka and Yabus payams have resorted to gold mining in exchange for food and other products.

Western Jebels

Far farm harvests are ongoing in Western Jebels. The harvest was generally poor in the four counties. According to reports, food production in Lagawa County was estimated at 45 per cent, Dilling at 40 per cent, Habilla and Al-sonut at 35 per cent. From these statistics, it has been reported that about 80 per cent of the population will need food by the end of March 2020, because the little available food is being shared with returnees.

New details from Kaunyoro, New Tagali, and Rashad (isolated areas) suggest that the population is in dire need of food, medicine and education.

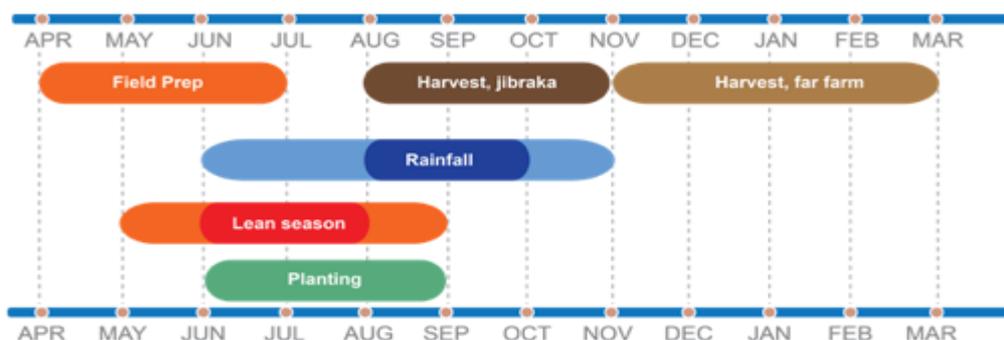
Highlights:

Increased migration: inadequate drug supply to meet increased demand

Heavy rainfall in the Two Areas affected crop production

WFP Executive Director, David Beasley's visit to Yabus, Blue Nile

UN team provides food and medicines to around 10,000 people in Yabus



Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and Blue Nile

Blue Nile

As previously reported, market functionality resumed to full operation after the rainy season; however, the festive season (Christmas and New Year) had an impact on local market prices. Higher prices were witnessed in Balila and Mayak markets of Wadaka payam where for instance, a price of a ratol of sugar significantly increased from 400 SSP to 700 SSP and coffee from 500 SSP to 1000 SSP in December. In Bala and Moguf markets, the price of chicken rose from 150 ETB (Ethiopian Biir) to 250 ETB. As previously reported in November, an estimation of only 40 per cent of the entire population in Blue Nile has purchasing power.

Western Jebels

Market prices were average in the 4 counties of Western Jebels. For example, the price of groundnuts fell from 45 SDG in November to 30 SDG in December, sorghum fell from 50 SDG in November to 50 SDG in December, sim sim fell from 180 SDG in November to 150 SDG in December, while beans/lubia reduced from 180 SDG in November to 175 in December.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

South Kordofan

Based on reports from the Secretariat of Health and the Humanitarian Monitoring Team, malaria and respiratory infections remain the most commonly reported diseases in the region. Many people from various towns in government-controlled areas are reported to be moving south to SPLM-N controlled areas for health services. During the CU field visit in coordination with SRRA in mid-December, it was discovered that Gidel Mother of Mercy Hospital in Hieban County, had recorded 88 patients from government-controlled areas. As a result, the facility has run out of drugs to and is unable meet the increasing demand, hence there is an urgent need for drugs and other medical supplies.

Blue Nile

Health facilities in Blue Nile have always faced challenges in serving the population. However, in December, the supply of drugs improved across the four payams of Chali, Komo Ganza, Wadaka, and Yabus,. Also, medical assistance from WHO received in the region during the UN visit in December provided a buffer. Despite the availability of drugs, there are still cases of malaria and skin diseases recorded in the region. Communities in Anyille, Aqontayo/Benamo, and Jindi, have a highly limited access to medical care, but with improved road conditions, they were able to access medical services. Health care in Blue Nile is highly limited and few clinics have the required drugs to deal with medical cases.

Western Jebels

In Western Jebels, malaria, skin infection and pneumonia were reported, which poses a major concern in the the region, as access to medical care is limited. Regarding nutrition, out of 439 Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) carried out in Kattla Rural Hospital, 30 cases were recorded at red level and 9 were at yellow. Malnutrition remains a serious issue in Western Jebels.

ANIMAL HEALTH

South Kordofan

The local Secretariat of Animal Health continues to report a lack of drugs. Livestock vaccination is required at the end of the rainy season to control disease outbreak. Drugs are available in crossline markets but are too costly for households.

Blue Nile

As previously reported, there is a fear of the spread of tse tse flies along Khor Yabus Valley because of the return of Fulani-Falatta nomads to the region, as their cattle are believed to be carriers of tse tse flies.

Western Jebels

The Secretariat reported cases of the dangerous diseases umzagalla, Abugenate and Abulissan. These diseases are often fatal to livestock, affecting hooves and tongues. Without access to vaccines or veterinarian care, these could spread and affect thousands of animals. In addition, limited drug supply, cattle rustling and lack of good pasture because of insecurity are challenges facing livestock keeping.

WASH

South Kordofan

The available water sources have started drying up. Access to clean water remains a significant challenge. Water-borne diseases still threaten a community without sufficient access to healthcare. More boreholes or treated water distribution centers are badly needed.

EDUCATION

South Kordofan

Schools opened for academic year 2020, but the lack of learning materials and school-feeding programmes, as well as parents' inability to pay school fees remain barriers to access to education. During the UN visit to Kauda, WFP identified feeding as a priority and has prepositioned food for 13,000 primary school children to support school-feeding program in Kauda and other communities. SoE on the other hand, is appealing to partners for support in terms of scholastic materials and other needs. Investment in education sector is needed.

Blue Nile

Resources for education in Blue Nile are scarce, likely creating a situation worse than South Kordofan for boys and girls. Teacher training opportunities are rare, poor community mobilization, incentives and scholastic materials are lacking. As per the previous report, 72 per cent of the students did not sit for 2018/ 2019 South Sudan National Exam and this impacted on the official opening of schools for 2019/ 2020 academic calendar in November.

Western Jebels

All primary schools reopened for 2019/2020 academic year. South Sudan Primary Leaving Examinations were concluded and out of 368 candidates, 345 sat for exams whereas, 23 did not get their index numbers.

The Teacher Training Institute run by local education authorities lacks scholastic materials and teachers' salaries. Urgent support is needed.

PROTECTION AND SECURITY SITUATION UPDATE

South Kordofan

December saw a high influx of returnees to the region and there is urgent need for more NFIs. The NFIs distributed recently were not enough for those affected by heavy rain, floods and fires that destroyed a number of houses in different counties.

Blue Nile

On December 1, armed men in uniform broke into Relief International (RI) compound inside Bunj town in Maban, South Sudan and assaulted five members of staff, robbing others of their cash and personal valuables. There is a fear that UN will quit its operations in the refugee camps, which will negatively impact on the refugees in the four camps of Doro, Genderassa, Kaya and Yusef Batil.

In December, WFP Executive Director David Beasley, visited Blue Nile. Visits to communities during such events should be communicated in advance – residents of Komo Ganza community, for instance, expressed concern when a visit occurred without sufficient prior notice.

In December, communities living in Ethiopian refugee camps briefly visited the area in good numbers to get some assistance mainly cash for Christmas celebrations. Some decided to stay in the region as returnees. However, there has been no concrete and formal registration conducted so far.

Western Jebels

As a result of new relations between SPLM-N and the government, some communities have started moving to distant places in search of land for farming.

The SKBN CU reports security incidents according to the information received from a variety of sources. This information does not include a comprehensive verification of perpetrators or damages.

This monthly update on humanitarian issues in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states is compiled by the SKBN Coordination Unit. With three main functions of information, coordination and advocacy, the SKBNCU strives to put out regular and accurate information on the humanitarian situation of people affected by the conflict since 2011. Please send your comments to advocacy@skbncu.org

