



# Southern Sudan Food Security Update



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## FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

### Highlights:

- Some areas in Southern Sudan becoming chronically food insecure...
- Vegetation improves in the green belt but remained poor in most of Southern Sudan...

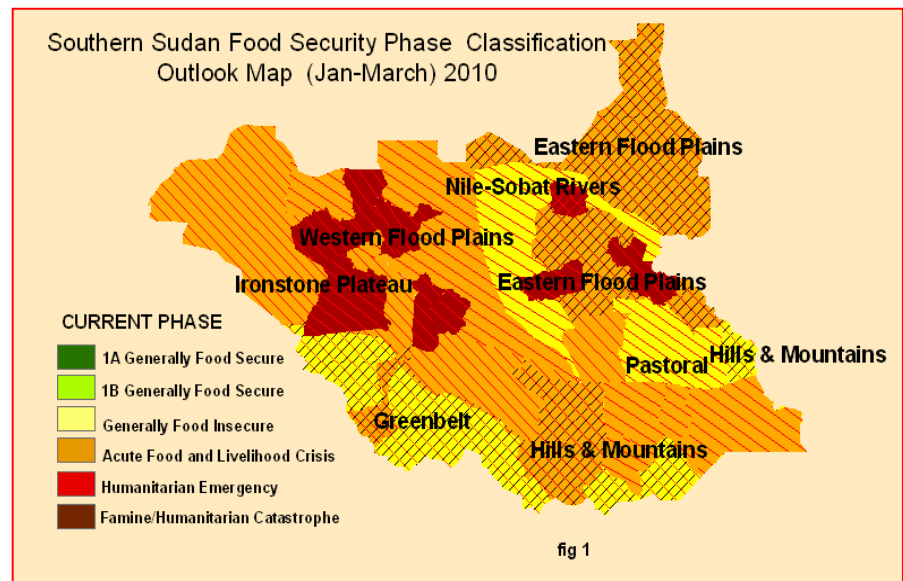
Quarterly Livelihood Analysis Forum concludes that food insecurity still prevalent among most rural households

Produced by the Food Security Technical Secretariat of GOSS

Collaborating Government of Southern Sudan Institutions

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
2. Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries
3. Ministry of Health.
4. Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation.
5. Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission

Underlying the cereal production shortfall of 38% during 2009 cultivation period, the quarterly Livelihood Analysis Forum held in Wau from March 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> 2010, concluded that there is general food shortages in Southern Sudan. The urban communities have better access to food through markets. However, the situation has not improved especially for most rural pastoral and agricultural communities. Figure 1 on the right depicts the food security outlook for both current and imminent period. In the analysis, the green belt covering Western Equatoria and parts of



Central and Eastern Equatoria are generally food insecure with moderate risk of worsening phase; however, there are some locations within the zone such as Ezo, Terekeka and Northern Bari at Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC) situation. This requires support to livelihoods and protection of vulnerable groups. The Ironstone plateau, Hills and Mountains, Arid and Western Flood Plains livelihood zones are generally at an AFLC stage, which is similar to the Eastern Flood Plain zone covering parts of Jonglei and Upper Nile States. Within the Ironstone plateau and Eastern Flood Plains are pockets of communities whose food security situation is critical and are at a Humanitarian Emergency Phase. These groups require urgent protection of vulnerable groups, improvement of food access through complementary interventions and protection against complete assets depletion. The Nile Sobat River livelihood zone is generally food insecure (but moderate risk of worsening phase) as communities survive through wild food gathering, hunting and fishing.

A joint effort of the Government of Southern Sudan with United Nation Organizations and International Non-Governmental Organizations

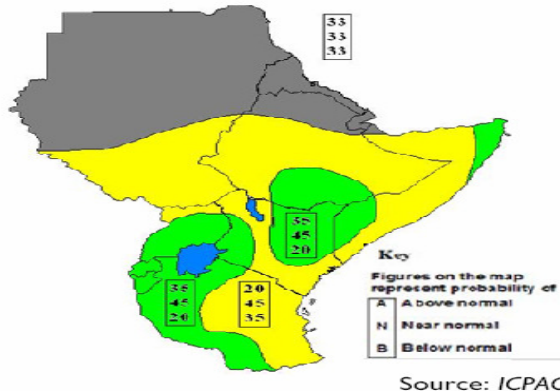


SIFSIA is a programme funded by the European Commission to build capacity in food security in Southern Sudan

For more information or comments, please contact: [fs.bulletin@gmail.com](mailto:fs.bulletin@gmail.com)

## Seasonal Rainfall and Vegetation Performance

**Figure 2: CPAC Consensus Rainfall Forecast March-May, 2010**

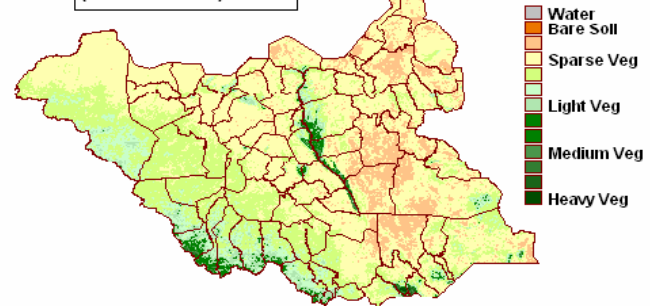


The IGAD Climate Predictions and Applications Centre (ICPAC) consensus outlook forecast indicates generally near-normal conditions for the March to May season over the equatorial sector where the season is most important. This season is likely to be marked by a timely onset with peak rainfall occurring in April (Figure 2) (source: FEWS Net: East Africa Regional Food Security Update, March 2010)

The performance of vegetation has been analyzed using the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). It is a measure of how green the vegetation is at a particular time. This is used to measure the general vegetation covering the earth. It is used as a proxy for measuring several types of vegetation including crops, rangeland, trees etc. The satellite images are produced every 10 days (dekad). The NDVI imagery has an archive of about 15-20 years which has been used to calculate average images for each dekad. These average images are used to calculate the difference from average.

The NDVI imagery indicates that vegetation improvement in most parts of Southern Sudan remain poor for the period January to March 2010. However, improvement has been noticed in Western Equatoria as a result of on-set of rains in the counties of Tombura, Yambio and Ezo (Figure 3). The improvements in the vegetation and pastures extend to Yei, Morobo and Kajo-Keji. In Eastern Equatoria, one location that has shown consistency in the vegetation greenness is the southern parts of Torit and also Kajo-Keji. The vegetation has been relatively good most of the time. Farmers within the green belt zone have started to prepare land for first season cultivation, but the implication is adverse for pastoralists who have to move to areas of improved pastures and water availability like the sudd region and 'toiches' to graze their livestock. Prices of livestock is expected to continue downward trend as large numbers are sold cheaply, thus affecting the terms of trade of against livestock owners who depend on sale of their animals to purchase cereals.

**Figure 3: MAX NDVI (JAN-MARCH) 2010**



## Nutritional Status in Southern Sudan

Malnutrition in most states of Southern Sudan remains chronic, with the peaks during lean period and declining at the time of harvest. During this reporting period, nutrition situation is poor and expected to worsen further given the food insecurity documented since late last year 2009. However more efforts and attention was given both by the government and agencies to tackle the food insecurity through provision of food aid for the most vulnerable households and communities thus, alleviating the nutrition situation of individuals at the household and community levels.

In Akobo County of Jonglei state, the nutrition situation is very critical as was revealed by the survey conducted by MEDIAR and Save the Children among children under five of age; the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate was 45% while Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) was 15% (MEDIAR\_MARCH 2010 Report). These figures exceeded the WHO standard for emergency (GAM, SAM), therefore, worrisome given the complex situation of food insecurity, illness, civil insecurity, displacement and many other chronic issues which further deteriorate and threaten lives in the County. While in Pibor

County increasing rates of malnutrition have been reported by MSF-B (UNOCH EP&R\_MARCH 2010 REPORT). The high malnutrition rate can be linked to household food insecurity; poor access to health services, poor hygiene/sanitation in addition to continues insecurity in the areas.

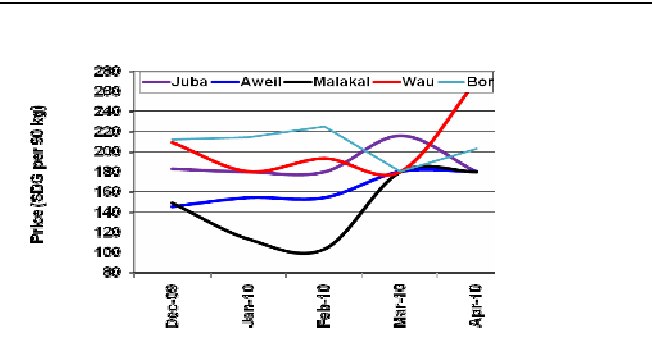
To improve the general nutrition situation in southern Sudan, there should be scaling up of the existing therapeutic feeding programs to prevent further deterioration of the severely malnourish vulnerable groups e.g. children under five years, continuous monitoring of the situation, improving household food security and health service delivery by both the government and the agencies concerned.

## MARKET TRENDS

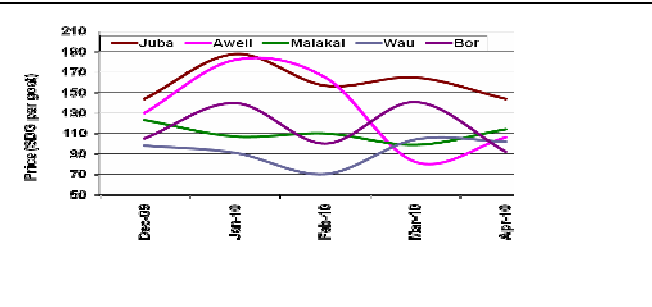
Cereal price was stable over the past few months. Price normally tends to get higher at the beginning of a hunger period which this year started a bit earlier than the previous years because of poor performance of the 2009 agricultural season. The prices are expected to be increase in most markets in the coming few months as the demand for cereals rise in the markets and household stock from previous year's meagre harvest is depleted This will make households dependent heavily on markets for the coming few months until the next seasons' harvest which will be available only in September, 2010. This could force poor households to employ various consumption based coping strategies such as reducing the number of meals consumed in a day or consuming less preferred food. Some members of the household may need to engage in other non-farm income generating activities to fill household food consumption gaps.

Currently livestock prices are stabled in Malakal and Wau and are showing slight downward movements in the rest of the markets (see Figure XX). In the coming few months it is expected that the situation will not be in favour of precarious for livestock keepers. The general trend during this time of the year is that cereal prices continue to be high while livestock prices decline significantly. Despite the rainy season commencing in Western Equatoria, pastures are very poor in most parts of Southern Sudan where pastoralism is the most dominant livelihood support mechanism. This situation may trigger livestock keepers to take more livestock to the market for sale. This in turn will depress livestock prices to the disadvantage of livestock keepers forcing them to sell more livestock for the same amount of cereal they used to purchase in the previous months. For example, as indicated in Figure XX, a livestock keeper was able to buy 34 kg of Sorghum in exchange of one goat in April in Bor, while it was possible to buy 59 kg of sorghum by selling a goat in January 2010. The price of livestock may improve at the start of the rainy season when livestock keepers refrain from selling more livestock because of speculation of better pasture. But, the

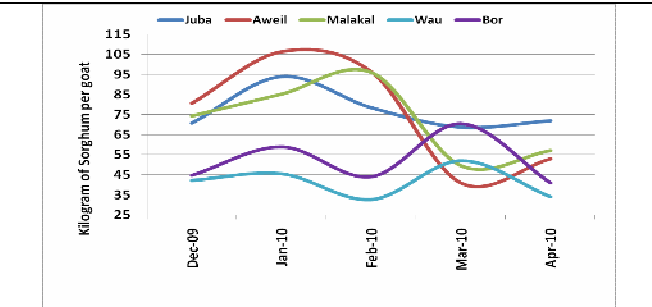
**Figure XX: Sorghum price in selected markets (Dec 09– Apr 10)**



**Figure XX: Goats price in selected markets (Dec 09 – Apr 10)**



**Figure XX. Sorghum – Goat terms of Trade (Dec 09 – Apr 10)**



Source: State Ministries of Agriculture and Animal Resources, as depicted in CLiMIS website

cereal prices during the rainy season will continue to rise with counterbalancing effect on livestock-cereals terms of trade. This could happen as a result of a sharper increase in sorghum and other cereal prices compared to those of livestock prices.

## FOOD SECURITY ANALYSIS BY STATE

### CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATE

Percentage of severely food insecure in central Equatoria is likely to be higher than previously estimated by ANLA 2009/10 extrapolations. The main drivers of food insecurity are last years crop failure and inter-tribal fighting/cattle raiding. Food insecurity is expected to persist until July. The most vulnerable households are those in Juba County, Wonduruba Payam and IDP's in Terekeka County, Gemeiza Payam. In Terekeka County, the conflicts between the Mundari tribe and the Dinka bor of Jonglei state, Dinka Aliab of lakes and the Bari tribe of Juba County have caused houses and food granaries to be burnt down completely, Food and livestock looted causing food shortage. The food shortage is likely to result into more cattle raiding, robbery/banditry and civil unrest. WFP, IRW and CHF delivered food, seeds and tools to 7000 IDPs in Gemeiza. (ANLA 2010, WFP)

However land preparation had started in areas like Lainya, Yei and Kajo-keji with expectation of planting as soon as the rain starts. Crop failure resulting from erratic rainfall last year has made most households consume the little they had harvested from the previous seasons hence left them with no seeds for planting despite their potential to serve as food basket for the southern Sudan. Most of the households will not be able to access the seeds from the market because their main source of income is from the sale of cereals hence crop failure implies no income. Major towns like Juba have food commodities available in the market, prices are increasingly high coupled with the election period where most of the traders left towns and others moving out of the country. Seeds & Tools distribution by FAO & partners targeting total of 10,000 households in all the six counties of CES, 70 % IDPs and Returnees, 30% to Vulnerable Households among Host community (UNOCHA,EP&R\_MARCH 2010).

### EASTERN EQUATORIA STATE

Rain shortage has brought food security deterioration and this has affected all households and hence causing insecurity and population movement. Due to food insecurity at household level, parts of the families coping mechanism includes child forced labour, child prostitution and forced marriage. There is also reported population movement due to food insecurity, 63 families have moved to Kenya and 73 to Uganda from Budi County (SSRRC REPORT\_MARCH 2010). Food insecurity is also likely to result in a series of cattle raid and encounter raids between various ethnic groups within Budi County but also with the surrounding counties (Ikotos, Kapoeta south and north). Some households have turned to Gold mining as a coping mechanism and putting children at risk in order to access food. Food security is of major concern with 6000 IDPs (displaced since 2009) in Budi County (SSRRC joint assessment March\_2010).

Regular attacks in Nanyangachor have also been reported by SSRRC from Turkana ethnic group from Kenya who conducts cattle raids. There were food product supply to Nanyangachor from Uganda and Kenya and this has deteriorated this year due to lack of logistic, road condition access and insecurity. In this county most community are coping by collecting wild fruits for the women and the children but also fed on milk. Several community members are trading animals against food in Narus and Kapoeta market. But due to insecurity and difficult access, this is extremely limited. Reports also registered children under 5years suffering from Marasmus. WFP is actually conducting a general food distribution (SSRRC REPORT\_MARCH 2010).

## WESTERN EQUATORIA STATE

The security incidents of LRA rebels continue in the western part of the WES and in adjacent DRC. UNDSS in April reported that LRA in western Equatoria is divided in small groups and are still presently not well coordinated but still cause fear among local population. Serious Movement from villages to towns have been noted causing increased population in Yambio town causing high demand for food. Serious hunger has been reported by SSRRC in Mundri west and people are in need of food. State crop assessment performance report had been forwarded to WFP for follow up. An estimated number of 11,080 IDPs have received food aid in Ezo town. WVI distributed food aid to 101 IDPs households (588 individuals) in Yambio County. However WFP reports food distribution in Ezo to 11,294 IDPs and 2800 refugees (UNOCHA EP&R, April 2010).

However land preparation has started in January in Ezo, Tambura, Nzara, Yambio, Ibba and Maridi counties. Rain started mid February with cultivation of maize and ground nut, pasture development, mangoes at ripening stage, coffee at pin head stage and maize at 4-5 leaves.

## NORTHERN BAHR EL GHAZAL STATE

The general food security condition is not stable following the early start of the lean period due to the shortfall in 2009 crop production and high food prices which have contributed greatly to the instability of the situation in most parts of the state. Most affected are the vulnerable residents, IDPs and the returnees. The condition is likely to deteriorate in the coming months, though Agencies especially WFP is putting more efforts in food aid assistance to the most severely and moderately food insecure households by distributing assorted food items to improve the situation and prevent further deterioration. Still efforts are needed till the first harvest period by both the government and Humanitarian Agencies. Land preparation has started in some parts of the state farmers expected to start planting with the start of rainfalls. Food commodities in the markets are expected to reduce with the opening of the railway transport from the North to the state. Livestock condition still very poor due to lack of pasture and water.

## WARRAP STATE

The state has experienced a number of ethnic clashes since the beginning of the year causing much displacement to the communities, hence contributing to the already chronic food insecurity condition experienced by majority of the households. The Counties worst affected by the clashes were Tonj South and East. WFP/WVI is carrying out general food distribution to all counties in the state and mainly targeting the most affected groups such as IDPs, Vulnerable residents and the returnees. The distribution started in Tonj South with a two months food ratio to 1650 IDPs and 372 HH were also supported with NFIs, while in Tonj East an estimated population of 8,000 were supported with assorted food items to assist them during this hunger period.

Farmers are expected to start land preparation for the coming cropping season as the onset of the rains nearing. Food commodities in the main markets remain at high rates affecting vulnerable households in terms of accessibility. The livestock condition is very poor due to lack of pasture and water, and also the products supply is very limited. Cattle rearing communities fear to move with their cattle to the pasture and water grounds bordering Lakes and Unity states for fear of cattle raiders.

## JONGLEI STATE

The state has the highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (over 85,000) due to consequences of inter-ethnic conflicts, poor harvest last year and intermittent child abductions. In mid-March, there were reports of ten people killed in Pochalla County during ethnic clashes. However, there has been much improvement in security situation as a result of the Government disarmament activities currently going on. Fewer cases of conflicts reported. In addition, humanitarian aid provided by the UN WFP and other agencies to all vulnerable persons in the state, coupled with improved road access to Akobo, Urur etc by Government has relieved the potential food insecurity. Food prices in the main markets remained high but stabilized temporarily by the general food distribution.

### UPPER NILE STATE

As election euphoria grip the state, most traders originally from northern Sudan are leaving town and closing up business, this actions are expected to result in shortages of essential food commodities, increase in prices and thus affecting households' access to food. Already there are a number of displacements in and around Malakal County due to inter-ethnic clashes in Fashoda, Baliet and Panyikang Counties. WFP Annual Needs and Livelihood Assessment (ANLA) report for 2009 estimated that 19% of the state's households are severely food insecure However, humanitarian assistance is being delivered and the situation is expected to improve after the elections as traders shall regain confidence to move essential goods around the major markets.

### WESTERN BAHR EL GHAZAL STATE

Though the state is at Acute Food and Livelihood Phase, the situation remains stable due to availability of food commodities in the markets. Prices are though high. The situation is however expected to worsen as hunger gap has commenced. WFP has distributed assorted food items to the food insecure people in the three counties of the state to improve their food security situation during this hunger period; 345 MT, 172MT and 68MT of assorted food were distributed in the counties of Jur River, Wau and Raja respectively during the month of March.

The livestock prices during March were reported to be 837 SDG for Bull, 940 SDG for Cow and 82 SDG for goat. However, these prices are expected to decrease as cattle owners would increase sale of livestock to purchase cereals in the coming months to meet their food needs.

### UNITY STATE

Below normal agricultural production last year coupled with increased displacements in Abiemnom and those Counties bordering Warrap state have resulted into elevated food insecurity situation. The Annual Needs and Livelihood Assessment (ANLA-WFP) of 2009 estimated a proportion of 18% (120,000 people) severely food insecure. Interventions by Government and agencies are underway; WFP have completed distribution of food to a total of 78,830 beneficiaries covering the months of March and April 2010 (UNMIS/RRR Weekly Report 22<sup>nd</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> March 2010). Anticipated shocks are the Misseriya attack and cattle raiding/incursions from neighbouring state of Warrap.