



Southern Sudan Food Security Update



Volume: 011

Month : **May – June** 2010

Release Date: **5 July** 2010

FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

Highlights:

- Southern Sudan Council of Ministers resolves to remove taxes on essential food commodities...
- Halve the population of Southern Sudan living on less than a \$ 1 (2.4 SDG) a day...
- Vulnerable households still face food shortages...

The prices of food commodities have direct impact on food availability and access. In circumstances where high prices are affecting food security, major government policy decisions have to be made. This was the case in Southern Sudan. On May 14th 2010, the Council of Ministers resolved to remove taxes on essential food commodities such as grains and animal products while also allocating USD 35 million to help address food insecurity and emergency. This amount is half the total required amount of USD 70 million. High taxes had thus far reflected negatively on consumers' access to essential food commodities. Therefore, with this historic and long-over-due decision, it is expected that food items that mainly come from neighbouring countries shall become affordable to most households in Southern Sudan. This decision comes at a time when Southern Sudan is facing food shortages as a result of crop failure last season due to drought and other factors such as civil insecurity which displaced many households from their homestead.

The just concluded (June 2nd to 4th 2010) Livelihood Analysis Forum (LAF) depicts a situation of general food insecurity in Southern Sudan (**Figure 1**). In a three days workshop, deliberations and analysis of food security information collected from all ten states of Southern Sudan, the Analysts concluded that Greater Kapoeta, parts of Eastern Jonglei and counties of Ibba, Nzara and Tombura in Western Equatoria state are at Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis situation. The risk of sliding into a worse food security phase is high. Numerous displacements were experienced all over Southern Sudan with the highest numbers being in Jonglei, Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria and Greater Bahr el Ghzal states.

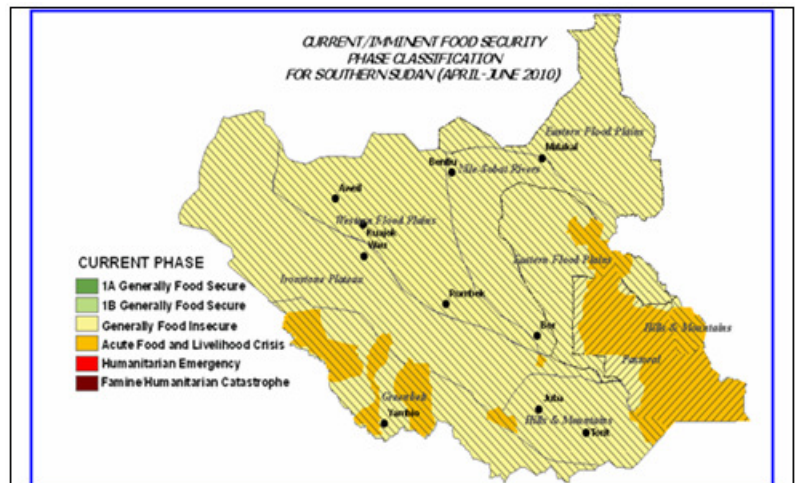


Figure 1: Source: Livelihood Analysis Forum (LAF) : 2nd - 4th June 2010

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

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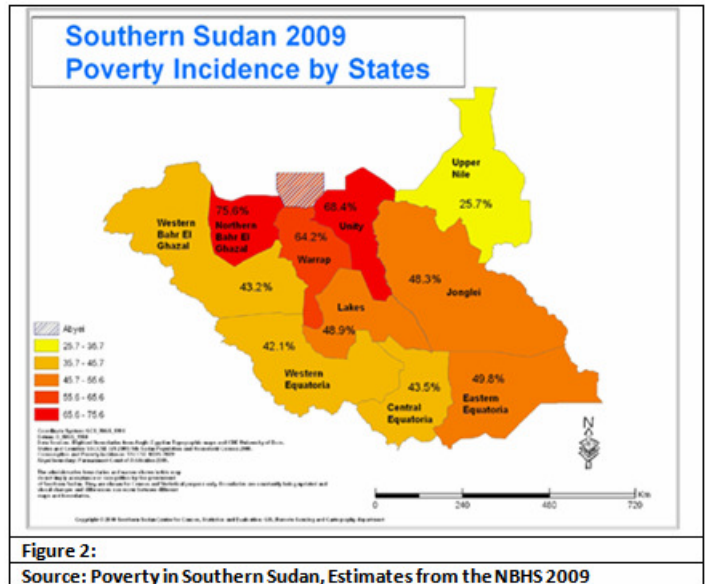
SIFSIA is a programme funded by the European Commission to build capacity in food security in Southern Sudan

For more information or comments, please contact: fs.bulletin@gmail.com

Poverty still a beast to fight in Southern Sudan

security, health, education, rights etc. It is often defined in terms of income at operational level. Therefore, capability of a human being to access a food basket to meet its consumption needs is one measure of this deprivation. In the just released Poverty Incident Report for Southern Sudan, one out of two Southern Sudanese is poor, that is 50.6% of the total population. The poverty line was calculated at 73 Sudanese pounds (SDG) per person per month i.e. about 2.4 SDG/Person/day. Urban and Rural population falling below poverty line were 24.4 and 55.4 percent respectively. Greater Bahr el Ghazal is ranked as the poorest at 61.6% compared to Greater Equatoria (43.7%) and Greater Upper Nile (45.2%) that have relatively similar proportions of poor population (**Figure 2**). Poverty is directly related to food insecurity because lack of adequate and proper nutrition in itself is a structural or underlying cause of poverty. Food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition prevent poor people from escaping poverty because it limits their capacity to learn, work and care for themselves and family members. Therefore, chronically hungry (food deprived) people May not be able to build or amass the necessary assets to enable their exit from poverty. Southern Sudan has continually since early 2009 been generally food insecure. It has failed to produce enough food to feed its people and have generally depended on food imports from neighbouring countries especially Uganda and Kenya and food aid. Undoubtedly, food prices are high and thus out of reach for the vulnerable poor which constitute almost half its population.

Poverty encompasses deprivations that relate to human capabilities including consumption and food



To address this problem, the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has as indicated above, taken a bolt step of removing taxes from food commodities and allocated substantial amounts of funds to fight current emergencies. Additional options may involve following a 'twin-track' approach: (i) strengthening the production and incomes of the hungry and poor, targeting the rural areas where the vast majority of them live and the agricultural sector on which their livelihoods depend, and (ii), providing direct access to food and create safety nets for the hungry (The Status of Food Insecurity in the World_2005).

NUTRITIONAL STATUS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

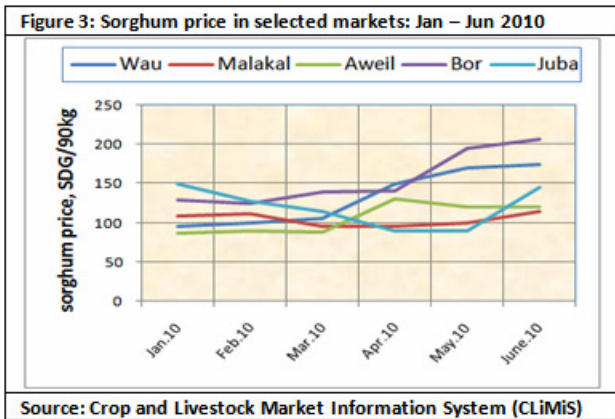
Malnutrition remains chronic in most parts of southern Sudan. During this reporting period, the nutrition situation has been poor and is expected to worsen given the food insecurity documented since late 2009. In areas where Government and Humanitarian Aid Groups have been able to conduct assessments, malnutrition rates are alarming. Worse cases of malnutrition are reported from Jonglei and Warrap states as conflicts, displacement and destitution have become nearly endemic. In Akobo County, MEDAIR reported a total of 687 children admitted in Koat and Dengjok Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTP) between March and May 2010 as they were severely malnourished. Currently the OTP has 190 children and 2 in stabilization centre. World Vision (WI) reported Acute Malnutrition rate of 20.18% in Warrap State following an assessment. While in Lakes State, 3% of Children under the age of 5 are extremely malnourished (SMoH). In Western Bahr el Ghazal health and nutrition conditions are in line with averages across Southern Sudan which are consistently above acceptable World Health Organization (WHO) emergency thresholds, and basic access to health services is severely limited. Admissions of malnourished patients trebled in the first two months of the year (United Nations News Service - May 2010). One of the underlying causes of this malnutrition in some of these states is the deprivation of household members especially children from livestock products e.g. milk and Yoghurt as livestock are constantly looted and households are left without their primary source of livelihoods.

MARKET TRENDS

Market prices monitoring is a good indicator for assessing food availability and households' ability to access them. The Crop and Livestock Information System (CLiMiS) which can be found at www.southsudan-climis.org, is a government of Southern Sudan website for monitoring both Crop and Livestock Market prices and is regularly updated by State Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry, Animal Resources and Fisheries. It also acts as an information platform for Policy makers end users

such as traders and other relevant stakeholders. The most common food items and livestock prices monitored are, for Sorghum, Maize, Cattle and Goats. These are assumed to be the most commonly used commodities by households in Southern Sudan.

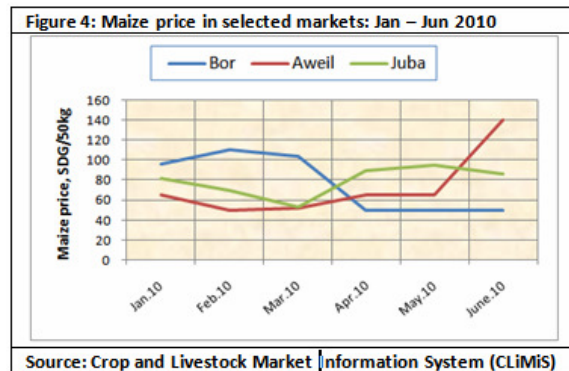
Therefore, below are some of the sample price trends for the above mentioned commodities.



The Sorghum price started to rise from the month of April and continue to increase in June (Figure 3). This signalled the scarcity of sorghum in the market and the beginning of the lean season. This trend is often observed in Southern Sudan during the hunger gap and at a time when most farming households are engaged in cultivation. The highest prices were observed in Bor and Wau and the lowest in Aweil and Malakal markets (Figure 3). Bor markets exhibit high sorghum prices due to insecurity and intermittent Juba-Bor road closer which affected commodity movements. Additional reason for price hike in April was because of the election fever forced most traders deserted Southern

Sudan either for Northern Sudan or neighbouring countries as they anticipated violence. Compared to last year, sorghum prices have increased in all selected markets by 17 – 59 percent; in Juba, Bor, Wau, Aweil and Malakal by 17, 27, 59, 33 and 44 percent respectively.

Maize price is reported to be highest in Aweil Market, while Bor and Juba markets showed relatively stable prices (Figure 4). Large quantities of this commodity are imported from Uganda and Kenya. The stable price is a reflection of the masking impact of a general food distribution by World Food Programme which might have improved availability and accessibility.



Livestock prices have started declining during the reporting period in all major markets of Southern Sudan. The downward trend is often the case during this period of the year when hunger season sets in; livestock owners begin distress selling of assets to access cereals whose prices shoot upwards. An average medium-sized bull costs between 750 to 1350 SDG in all major markets of the ten states. The lowest (750 SDG) and highest (1350 SDG) average prices were registered in Kwajok and Yambio/Wau respectively. The price of male goat also showed a downward trend in all major markets except in Yambio, Wau and Malakal. The highest price (275 SDG) and the lowest (87 SDG) were reported in Yambio and Rumbek respectively.

The terms of trade (ToT), which is here measured in terms of how much sorghum a livestock owner gets when s/he sells one goat, has definitely deteriorated against pastoralists' households and improved for the cereal sellers. A livestock owner has to sell more than one goat to buy 90kg sack of sorghum currently as compared to the first three months of the year. This often means that Pastoralists would have to start coping strategies to maintain lives. However, there is great improvement in rangeland conditions allowing livestock to have enough pasture to graze and thus produce better quantities of milk which Pastoralists families often depend on to a great extent.

FOOD SECURITY ANALYSIS BY STATE

CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATE

In an effort to encourage food production, the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Animal Resources and Fisheries in partnership with FAO, targeted 10,000 farming households (inclusive IDPs and Returnees) for seeds and tools distribution. Farmers are expected to scale up production if the current effective rains continue. Humanitarian food aid is also provided to the displaced and Returnees. Entrepreneurship in poultry production is growing in the state; over 30 peri-urban farms are currently producing eggs and broilers for local marketing with grants from the World Bank (source: CES MoAFAP- **Figure 5**). Large quantities of fowls used to be imported from Uganda and local retail prices were exorbitant, thus it is expected that with increased local production, prices may become affordable. The effort by county authorities to return cattle looted from neighbouring communities enhance availability of livestock products locally. Civil insecurity has considerably improved with exception of recent displacement in Tombek Payam in Terekeka as a result of cattle raiders attack on the community. However, with the new government now in place, the situation is expected to improve and communities to revitalize disrupted livelihoods.



Figure 5: Chicken traders – source CES MoAFAP

EASTERN EQUATORIA STATE

The state witnessed improved rainfall performance this season as opposed to the drought conditions of 2009 which resulted in crop failure and hunger among communities. To mitigate the hunger situation and allow farmers to engage in meaningful agriculture this season, government and agencies have embarked on provision of seeds, tools and relief food aid for the communities in the state. Government strategic food reserves have also provided much needed food though stocks have gone down considerable. Generally, food commodities are available especially in markets situated in the major towns, though prices are high and thus low income groups are unable to access these essential commodities. There is also increased interest especially among women groups in income generating activities such as vegetable growing, poultry production and sale of animal products. Groups are supported by Norwegian Church Aid, Catholic Diocese of Torit among others to help improve livelihoods among vulnerable community members/households.

NORTHERN BAHR EI GHAZAL STATE

Communities in the state are experiencing a situation of general food insecurity as a result of poor crop harvests last season due to poor rainfall. Coping strategies (e.g. reduction of meals both quantity and frequency, sale of labour and wood fuel) are currently being employed by most households involving collection of wild foods. The situation in the main towns is expected to improve as the railway line gets repaired and commodities easily sourced from the northern states by traders. However, vulnerable households may not readily have access to these essential commodities as a result of their weak purchasing powers. The Aweil Revitalization Project is one positive scheme being executed in production of Rice and other cereals. The project targeted 410 tenant farmers with slightly over 1000 feddans for Rice production and also facilitating other farmers to cultivate cereals.

WARRAP STATE

The communities in the state have had less respite from the continuous conflict resulting from cattle raids, revenge killings and displacements. These have impacted negatively on the lives and livelihoods of people especially in Greater Tonj, Gogrial East and Twic Counties. Gogrial west is inundated with returnees who largely depend on kin support and market. An Integrated Team Assessment report by UNMIS indicated that over 30,000 herds of cattle concentrated around grazing pasture areas were looted during early May 2010 raids by cattle rustlers from Unity State and that over 75% of the population in the area have lost their main means of livelihood. This has also resulted into displacement of 900 households who are made destitute. Potential impact on children nutrition is expected to be bad as scarcity of milk and other livestock product is imminent.

LAKES STATE

Ethnic conflicts were becoming endemic in the state, however, the state government have tried their best to contain the civil insecurity with relative tranquillity achieved. However, Counties of Cueibet, Rumbek North and Yirol East witnessed inter-ethnic conflicts and cattle rustling. This civil insecurity resulted in a number of displacement and minimum engagement by the agro-pastoral communities in agricultural activities. In areas where relative calm exist, farmers have intensified cultivation and average acreage of slightly above 4 feddans per household under cereal (sorghum, maize and millet) have been reported by State Ministry of Agriculture Official. Tax exemption on essential food commodities have had positive impact on availability of these commodities in the state's major markets as traders take advantage and supply non-taxable commodities. Prices for Sorghum and Maize (sourced mainly from Uganda, Kenya and Northern Sudan) are 200 SDG/90kg and 100 SDG/50kg respectively. Non-privileged households however, still have limited access to these commodities and are vulnerable. General food distribution to vulnerable households by World Food Programme (WFP) has continued to alleviate adverse effect as a result of the hunger season. Coping strategies includes among others, sale of livestock, 'lulu' (Shea nut/oil), and charcoal to raise money for purchase of cereals.

UPPER NILE STATE

Though there is generally adequate food supply in the major markets, accessibility remain the major constraints to most vulnerable households in the state. These shortages, if continued would result in malnourishment with negative impact on lives and livelihoods. Recurrent inter-ethnic conflicts have also impacted severely on rural communities; an estimated 21,000 have been displaced from their homes especially in Panyikang and Baliet Counties into Payams around Malakal and Fashoda Counties. The state is considered number one in agricultural production in the south because it used to produce enough food to feed the whole of southern Sudan with surpluses exported to the northern Sudan markets. This has however gone down considerably due partly to insecurity and poor rainfalls during the past season. Plans are underway to improve security and intensify agricultural production. FAO is targeting 16,000 farming households with assorted seeds and tool.

WESTERN EQUATORIA STATE

The Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) has recently intensified attacks on local communities especially in the central and western parts of the State. This has again disrupted livelihoods and caused fresh displacement. This is expected to overshadow agricultural activities and thus have negative impact on households' food availability and access. Currently, there is general food insecurity with the non-displaced persons feeding from their own production reserves and the displaced/returnees receiving food aids from World Vision International/WFP, while the urban population depends largely on markets for their household needs. Samaritan's Purse (SP) is providing seeds and tools to 1708 households and Non-food Items (NFIs) to 987 households all LRA affected Internally Displaced Persons in Maridi and Ibba Counties, to help encourage them to cultivate. (*Source: SP progress report, June 10*).

WESTERN BAHR EI GHAZAL STATE

The state is in generally food insecure situation and there is general instability in prices of food commodities for the last three months especially for cereals and vegetables. However, most food commodities are available in the main markets as these are mainly sourced from the northern states of Sudan. As this is the lean season, households' food insecurity is expected to worsen. To mitigate the situation, WFP has distributed assorted food items to the food insecure people in the three counties of the state (Jur River, Wau and Raja); a total of 585 Metric tonnes during March 2010. 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

The state has witnessed large displacements (about 11,000) especially in Abeimnom and Mayoum Counties as a result of earlier fighting between the Misseriya tribesmen and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The later was also engaged in fighting the militia of one of their deserted officer. Insecurity also exists along the southern counties due to intermittent cattle raiding activities between Nuer and Dinka rustlers from Warrap

and Lakes states. The rains have also delayed in most areas of the state except in Guit and Fanarouk; which is expected to impact negatively on agricultural activities. However, the government is embarking on increasing access to agricultural implements and inputs. Care International will provide seeds and tools to 8,333 HHs in the counties of Abiemnom, Robkona and Pariang (*UNMIS RRR Weekly Report 9 – 15th May 2010*). Currently, vulnerable households coping strategies includes selling of grass, wood fuel, productive assets and consumption of wild foods including fish among others. Prices of staple cereal (e.g. Sorghum) have gone up and livestock prices are reducing considerably.

JONGLEI STATE

The state continued to be the most conflict affected and as a consequence, large displacements, destitution and malnourishment are rampant. However, the government is now trying to bring tranquillity to the state and allow communities to resume their disrupted lives and livelihoods. International as well as Local agencies are also assisting the government in mitigating emergency situations through provision of relief food aids, health services and non-food needs of the most vulnerable communities. ADRA, as implementing partner for FAO, has started the distribution of seeds and tools to 3,000 HHs in Payams in Bor County (Kolnyyang, Anyidi, Makuach, Baidit and Bor). The beneficiaries included returnees households, farmer groups, wounded soldiers and resident population. FAO official reported that they are targeting 25,000 households for handouts of assorted seeds (400Mt) and tools (81,550 pieces) for this cultivation season.

LIVELIHOOD ZONES OF SOUTHERN SUDAN

