

HIGHLIGHTS

PASTORAL LIVELIHOOD STRESS IN NORTHERN AND CENTRAL REGIONS

1. Consolidated Statement by FSAU on Pastoral Areas in the Northern and Central Regions : The FSAU will be producing a two page FSAU Consolidated Statement on the food security situation in Pastoral Areas in the north and central regions following a workshop to be held at the FSAU on 13 February 2004. In particular the workshop will rank the levels of food security for the concerned areas with an effort towards comparability and categorizations that will be useful for planning. The statement will be issued as a 'Flash' on February 18 2004 and circulated via e-mail to all FSAU's regular users.

2. January Pastoral Assessment in North and Central Regions : The FSAU carried out a rapid assessment in January, covering the south of the Sool Plateau and into central Somalia as far as Galkayo and the northern part of Hobyo district in Mudug Region. For a summary of the report please see page 2 and for a copy of the full report contact: alex.williams@fsau.or.ke

3. Lower Nugal Valley in Urgent Need of Assistance : During the above mentioned assessment, the FSAU found that immediate emergency assistance is required for an estimated 6,200 people in Lower Nugal Valley to preserve livelihoods. This finding has been supported by recent nutrition information. In December 2003, the FSAU, in collaboration with UNICEF and WHO mobile teams, conducted a rapid nutritional assessment in Taleh District. Results of the assessment showed a global acute malnutrition rate of 27% (MUAC <12.5cm) and a severe acute malnutrition of 5.8% (MUAC <11cm) of 175 randomly screened under-five children. Though not directly comparable, UNICEF/MOHL reported similar levels of malnutrition during their screening exercise in Taleh (Nov/Dec 2003). Malnutrition rates among 201 adult women (15-49 years) were 24%.

4. Sool Plateau : Sool Plateau remains in an emergency situation. While coordinated interventions to distressed households by Somali NGO's, international NGO's and UN agencies are underway, insecurity in the area disrupted some of the deliveries in January.

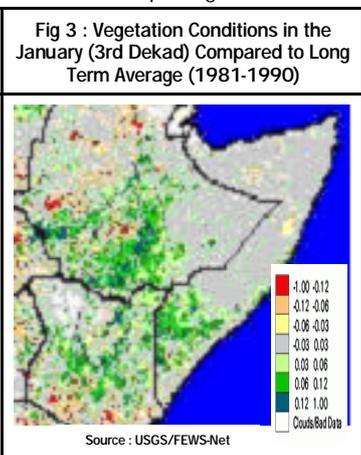
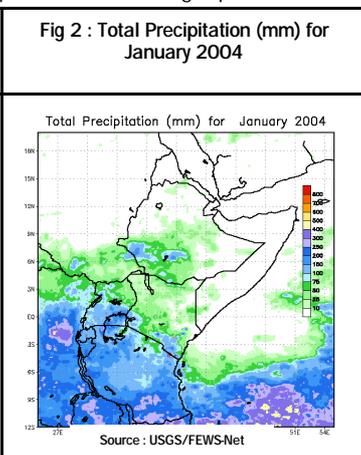
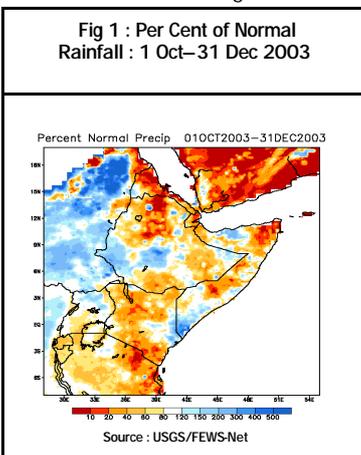
5. Togdheer and the Hawd Pastoral Zone : In Togdheer, no rain fell in the Hawd Pastoral Zone during January, although it is estimated that (60-70%) of pastoralists had already moved out of the drought stricken area into Ethiopia's Region V. However, poorer households, which could not leave the area, remain extremely food insecure and require close monitoring. For a copy of the FSAU-led inter-agency rapid assessment report on Togdheer (January 2004) please contact : alex.williams@fsau.or.ke

DEYR CROP ESTABLISHMENT IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA : Crop production for the Deyr 2003/2004 is estimated at 147,000 MT, approximately 50% sorghum and 50% maize. This estimate is 48% above the post war average of 100,066 MT. An estimated area of 286,270 hectares was planted. Insecurity, moisture stress, outbreak of birds, insects and pests may affect the final harvest production figure.

Hot, Dry Jilaa Season Commences Creating Additional Stress On The Pastoralist Livelihood In Northern and Central Regions

- Compared to the long term average, Deyr rainfall (1 Oct– 31 Dec 2003) was below normal in most parts of northern and central Somalia. See Fig 1. In particular rains were extremely poor in Hawd, Sool Plateau and Nugal valley Food Economy Zones in the north and Galgadud in the central regions. Poor Deyr rains resulted in a deterioration of the food security situation for some pastoral populations in the north and central regions where livelihoods are primarily dependent on livestock and livestock production.
- The long dry Jilaa season started at the beginning of January and as expected there has been virtually no rain since then. See Fig 2. As a result the vegetation conditions in many parts of the north and central regions are poor compared to the long term average. See Fig 3. Poor vegetative conditions particularly in Sool Plateau, Nugal and Hawd (Togdheer) rangelands, will continue to negatively affect livestock productivity which has already been declining.
- In Ethiopia's Region V, SC-UK have reported unseasonable rains in parts of Dagahbur, Korahe, Fik, Liban and Jijiga zones during the second dekad of January. However, no significant rains were received in the zones bordering Somalia (Warder, Gode, Afder, Korahe and eastern Dagahbur). It is therefore unlikely that Somali pastoralists in the drought affected regions will benefit from these rains as they would have to migrate deep into Region V to do so.
- In Southern Somalia where Deyr rainfall was normal, the vegetation conditions are good. The effect of the Jilaa season on pastoralists in the south is likely to be minimal. There has been good fodder production from agro-pastoral areas. Also, the re-opening of the Garissa cattle market and improved livestock conditions will create stronger terms of trade for pastoral and agro-pastoral groups.

Although the satellite imagery indicates no rain throughout northern Somalia, FSAU field reports indicate rainfall in pockets along the coastal belt of Awdal and some rangelands in Bari. For an update from these field reports see the Regional Highlights on Page 5.



FSAU's Key Funding Agencies :

European Commission



United States Agency for International Development



FSAU's Key Technical Partners :

EWS



World Food Programme

A Summary of Pastoral Conditions in North Eastern and Central Regions following an FSAU Rapid Drought Assessment to Affected Areas in January 2004

- The dry and hot *Jilaal* season is likely to place additional stress on pastoralists in the northern and central regions, where food security has already been declining in recent months, as reported by the FSAU. For many of the poorer pastoralists living in districts where below normal or failed *Deyr* 2003/2004 rains fell (and with previous insufficient seasons of rainfall) livelihoods have already been compromised by a depletion of assets, reduced incomes and increased expenditure on water. Insufficient *Deyr* 2003/2004 rainfall has also greatly reduced migratory options. The situation has been exasperated by poor *Deyr* rainfall in Ethiopia's Region V where up to 50,000 Somalia's pastoralists are thought to have moved in search of pasture and water during the *Deyr* season. (Note: SC-UK in Region V has reported unusual rainfall in January in Region V, but not in the zones bordering Somalia).
- Pastoral livelihoods in north eastern and central Regions need to be closely monitored because failure of the *Gu* rains would have disastrous effects.
- In June 2003, a rapid assessment highlighted that food insecurity had increased in both the Sool Plateau and in the Lower Nugal valley in Taleh, parts of Hudun, and parts of Garowe. This was confirmed by a subsequent inter-agency assessment in November 2003 which took place in Sool Plateau and Gebi Valley, Sool and Sanaag Regions.
- In January 2004, the FSAU led an investigation into the current areas affected by drought alongside OCHA, UNA, PACE, UNICEF and the Puntland Authorities. This assessment was intended to cover the pastoral areas in north eastern Somalia, south of the Sool Plateau in Sanag and Sool Regions. The original intention was not to include the Sool Plateau in Bari, but since the area had recently absorbed many in-migrating people and animals from other dry districts, it was included as well. The area under consideration stretches down into central Somalia as far as Galkayo and the northern part of Hobyo district in Mudug Region.
- The assessment found that **Area 'A'** (See Fig 4), which comprises the lower Nugal valley (Huddun, Taleh and parts of Garowe) is of greatest concern, as households have experienced extensive livestock losses due to successive rainfall failures. The area does, however, have water available, so expenditure on water has not been nearly as high as in Sool Plateau. Nevertheless, pasture is said to be worse than in Sool Plateau and households are subsequently facing difficulties accessing food and income. As a result, they have reduced their food intake and adopted environmentally damaging coping strategies to survive.
- The Lower Nugal Valley is in need of quick and effective emergency assistance to preserve livelihoods for approximately 20-25% of the original population. This takes into account the fact that many households have moved out of the area and that the poorest should receive the assistance. It is therefore estimated that 6,200 people need urgent assistance in this area.
- The assessment found that **Areas 'B and C'** (See Fig 4) (which comprises parts of lower Nugal valley, the *Hawd* of Garowe and Eyl, much of the *Hawd* of Burtinle, the eastern half of *Hawd* of Las Anod and the western part of the Addun in Jeriban) were hit by the current *Deyr* rainfall failure, with extensive livestock out-migrations to other host areas (like areas D and G shown). Food shortages have increased for poorer households and recent reports from the field indicate water prices are continuing to rise in parts of Addun and *Hawd* of Burtinle and Jeriban.

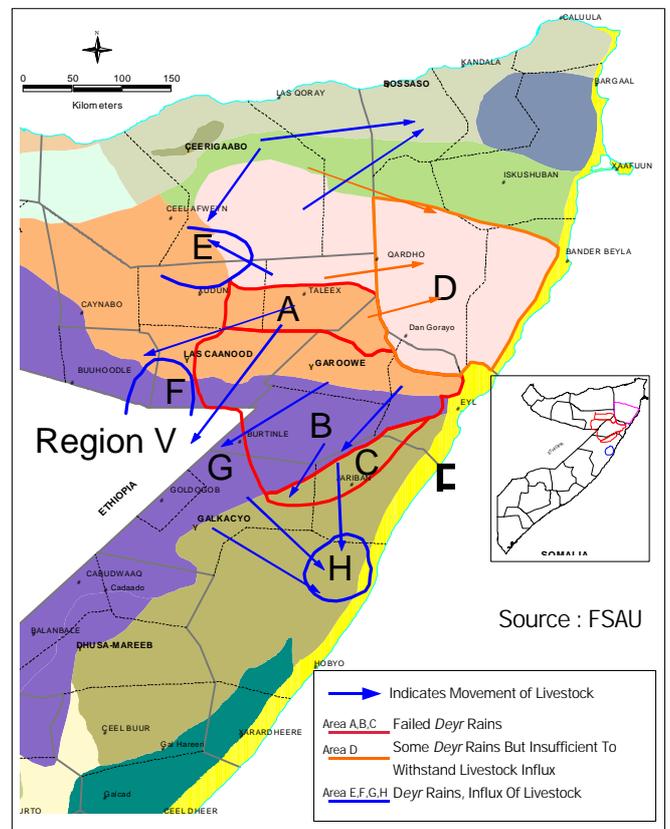
Area 'D', the eastern Sool plateau in Bari Region, is currently the host area for in-migrated pastoralists from western Sool and Lower Nugal valley. This area received late *Deyr* rains which have had a positive impact on pastoral livelihoods. However, the influx of livestock has raised concerns over a rapid depletion of water and pasture which is unlikely to last the dry *Jilaal* season. This in turn will lead to reduced milk yields and possibly an increase in livestock disease, which ultimately undermine household food security.

Areas 'F, G, H', (comprising the Upper Nugal valley, the *Hawd* of Buhodle and west of Las Anod, the *Hawd* of Galkacyo and Galdogob and south of Burtinle, the *Hawd* of Region V and the Golol in Hobyo) represent another hosting area for many livestock affected by drought. Some of the host areas (like area H) are conflict/disputed areas and need close monitoring.

As already stated, the area of most concern is the lower Nugal valley which requires emergency intervention to save lives, and should be thought of along the same lines as the Sool plateau. All other areas require close monitoring due to the pressures on livelihoods that the *Jilaal* season brings, and also to ascertain the impact of the migrating households on the host community's resources.

Long term interventions should be designed to enable the strengthening of the community by increasing understanding amongst households as to how better withstand adverse climatic conditions in the future.

Figure 4 : Map of The Affected And Host Areas in North Eastern and Central Somalia with Major Livestock Movements.



Source : FSAU

For a copy of FSAU's report, entitled : 'Rapid Mission to Investigate the Drought in Parts of North Eastern and Central Somalia' please contact : alex.williams@fsau.or.ke

2003/2004 Deyr Crop Establishment in Southern Somalia

- The FSAU and FEWS-Net Somalia conducted the seasonal crop establishment assessment between 27 December and 12 January 2004. Crop data was compiled from eight agricultural regions and analyzed in Wajid. In a normal year the establishment exercise takes place in early December. This year, however, due to the late start of rainfall, the Deyr establishment exercise took place slightly later.
- Deyr is the secondary cropping season in southern Somalia. The 2003/2004 estimated Deyr crop production figure, at around 147,000 MT, is well above the post war Deyr season average of 100,066 MT (1993-2003). Approximately half of the production is expected to be from sorghum and the other half from maize. Around 286,270 hectares of cereal were planted in southern Somalia, with 67% planted to sorghum and 33% to maize. Although the Deyr is considered normal, there are still pockets of potential crop failure due to the uneven distribution of rainfall. See Fig 5 below.

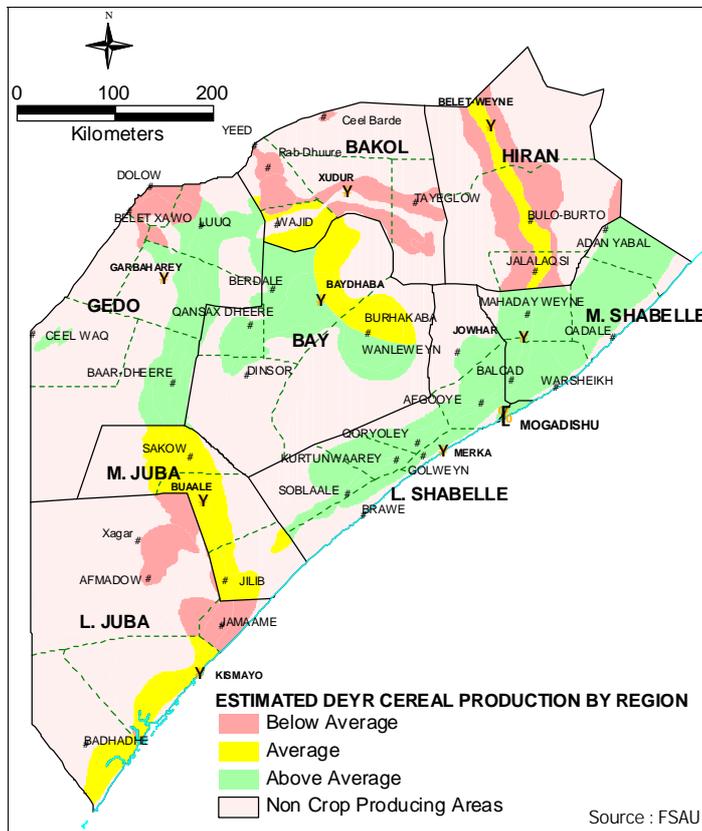
MAIZE

- Approximately 62% and 23% of the total maize production is expected from Lower and Middle Shabelle respectively. In the Shabelle Valley, gravity irrigated maize has done better than maize in other parts of southern Somalia. The cost of expensive diesel was the main constraint to growing maize (by pump irrigation) in Gedo and Hiran Regions.

SORGHUM

- Bay Region is expected to supply 52% of the total sorghum production, as a result of good rainfall in the high potential districts, particularly Qasaxdhere and Dinsor. Also the standing sorghum crop in Bay Region is not a ratoon crop but is newly planted from sorghum seeds, increasing the yields. Despite the delayed rainfall, the sorghum crop does look very promising.

Figure 5 : Estimated Deyr Cereal Production By Southern Somalia Regions



SESAME

- Sesame is a Deyr crop in both the Shabelle and Juba Valleys and an expectation of a high demand for sesame seeds and their oil encouraged farmers to allocate more land to sesame production particularly in riverine areas.
- The total sesame planted area is estimated at 63,840 hectares with an expected production of 18,800 MT. However, sesame web worms are the main constraint so far which will likely affect production especially in Lower Shabelle region.
- The FSAU will be carrying out a field assessment of the 2003/2004 Deyr harvest during February.
- For a copy of FSAU's report : 'Deyr Crop Establishment in Southern Somalia' please contact : alex.williams@fsau.or.ke

Situation of Wajid IDP'S in Bakol Region Remains Serious

- The current Deyr cereal production estimates are based on the assumption that harvesting will not be undermined by any of the following factors : insecurity, moisture stress, bird damage, insect and pest damage.
- The 2003/2004 Deyr season was characterized by delayed rainfall which began in the 2nd dekad of November 2003. Exceptions to this are in Bay Region (Qansaxdhere and Dinsor districts) and the southern districts of Gedo region where rainfall started in late October. Deyr rainfall was fairly irregular and of uneven distribution. In general the season's rainfall was sufficient for sorghum but not enough for rain dependent maize. Gravity irrigated maize performed better.

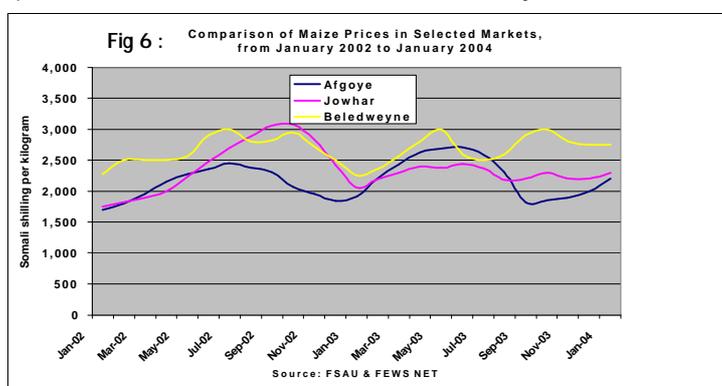
- On January 20/21 2004, the FSAU, UNICEF, WFP, ACF and World Vision conducted a joint multi-sectoral assessment in the three IDP camps of Bakaar Yar, Bakaar Weyn and Dhurrey in Wajid District, (Bakol Region) to review the food security situation and identify ways to address the current crisis. The IDP's were displaced from villages in Baidoa District in October 2003 following inter-clan fighting. They fled their homes without food, seeds or farm tools.
- The findings revealed critical global and severe acute malnutrition rates (WFH z scores) of 17.2% and 3.1% respectively and a high mortality rate of 3/10,000/day. (during the 30 days preceding the assessment date).
- These results were attributed to a poor food security situation; lack of primary health care, inadequate access to water and a poor child care environment.
- In addition to providing support to the ongoing reconciliation talks in Wajid among warring clans, the assessment team recommended interventions that would increase IDP access to food and non-food items (e.g. General Food Distribution, FFW and CFW), primary health care services, water and agricultural inputs to prepare for their eventual return to Baidoa.

Major Maize Markets Show An Increase In Price This Month

In three major maize markets in Southern Somalia (Belet Weyne, Afgoye and Jowhar), the maize price is increasing but for two different reasons and this is likely to continue until the next *Gu* Season begins.

- In Belet Weyne, the price of maize is higher compared to other markets and is higher than normal for the time of year. No rain-fed maize is expected to be harvested in Hiran which will increase prices in this market even further.
- In Afgoye and Jowhar (Shabelle) markets, close to the big Mogadishu market, demand for *Deyr* maize is expected to be high and this is likely to push the maize price up.

Compared to the average monthly price one year ago (January 2003), maize prices in these three markets have increased by about 17 per cent. See Figure 6. While high prices may be beneficial to producers, a high price will ultimately affect the consumer purchasing power and hence effect household food availability.



Highlights From The FSAU Nutrition Update

- In the Hawd of Togdheer, drought has had adverse effects on livelihoods but the impact on nutritional status has not been affected yet. In December 2003, about 8.4% of children aged 12-59 months from twelve assessed villages were malnourished (MUAC <12.5cm or oedema). Some of the villages, particularly those with failed *Deyr* rains were more affected than others. People and livestock have moved towards Ethiopia in search of water and pasture and relatively high levels of malnutrition have been noted in some of the host villages in Ethiopia (Dec 2003 Nutrition Update).
- The nutrition situation in Gedo has raised concern with recent increases in malnutrition reported in North Gedo. In Dolow and Belet Hawa Districts, the malnutrition rates were 15.4% and 25% respectively in Dec 2003 (MUAC < 12.5cm or oedema). High numbers of severely malnourished children continue to be admitted to the Belet Hawa Therapeutic Feeding Centre with almost 90 admissions during December. On site follow up of this situation is currently in progress.
- The FSAU Nutrition Training Manual and the 2004 calendar are now available.

Food Relief Distributions During January 2004

- In January CARE distributed a total of 495 MT of food (of which 443 MT was sorghum, 44 MT was lentils and 8 MT of vegetable oil) in El Waq District in Gedo Region to a total of 4,427 beneficiaries through free food distributions.
- Distributions were not carried out in the 3 northern districts (Belet Hawa, Dolow and Luuq) due to insecurity. However, it is expected that distribution will recommence in February.

Visit by FSAU Livestock Officer To Burao Slaughterhouse Shows How Somalia Is Striving To Overcome The Effects Of The Livestock Ban

Historically, cultural and economic ties between Somalia and the Gulf States have been strong, particularly as the economic power of the oil states grew. In particular, migrant workers, livestock, agricultural products, and basic industrial goods have been exported from Somalia to the Arabian Peninsula, while hard currency, oil products, industrial goods, construction materials, food commodities, technical know-how and development aid have flowed the other way.

Until the imposition of the livestock import ban by Gulf States in September 2000, Saudi Arabia's purchase of livestock from Somalia accounted for 40% of Somalia's Gross Domestic Product, and provided the major source of Somalia's foreign exchange.

To overcome the effects of the livestock import ban, a group of innovative Somali and international businessmen set about reviving Somalia's meat industry by setting up a new slaughterhouse in Burao, (there are five others throughout the country) to meet the ever growing global consumer demand for high quality chilled meat. The newly opened Burao slaughterhouse exported its first trial of freight to Dubai in mid-2003.

The slaughter house is situated on the outskirts of Burao. It can hold up to 1,200 shoats a day and slaughter up to 60 heads per hour. The FSAU Livestock Officer visited the slaughterhouse at the end of December 2003 and observed that it operated under stringent hygiene rules, as each processing stage had mandatory sanitary regulations enforced. The slaughterhouse specializes in a number of meat products such as:

- Whole carcasses which can be air-freighted to Gulf States. Different animal weights can be provided on request.
- Pre-cut pieces. Meat is cut into standard sizes, making the product ready for immediate customer use.
- Internal and external organs are distributed to local customers efficiently.
- Skins are removed from animals by machines and are therefore not damaged. The skins are sold to local tannery plants.

The Burao slaughter house also has all the necessary slaughtering facilities such as a laboratory, its own water supply (borehole), a resting place for animals, a skinning room, cooling room and a waste and drainage system. For more information contact : mahdi.kayad@fsau.or.ke

Table 1 : Livestock Export Table for January 2004

	October	November	December	January
Bossaso*				
Camel	160	8	514	99
Cattle	10,250	5,773	3,953	7,944
Shoats	161,795	114,832	114,890	189,167
Sub-Total Boss.	172,205	120,613	119,357	197,210
Berbera**				
Camel	2,775	0	1,507	0
Cattle	7,726	9,519	13,961	14,792
Shoats	40,262	72,819	76,720	177,376
Sub-Total Berb.	50,763	82,338	92,188	192,168
Total Number of Exports	222,968	202,951	211,545	389,378

* Bossaso Port Authority

** Berbera Port Authority

There was increased activity at Berbera port in January 2004 as more animals were exported to Gulf countries and in particular Saudi Arabia for the *Haj*. The number of shoats moving through Berbera port increased by 131% as compared to the total figure for December 2003. Bossaso port also saw a significant increase in export numbers, largely as a result of the *Haj*.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS

References to Food Economy Zones (FEZ's) relate to information concerning different Food Economy and Livelihood Zones. For a map of these areas please contact : fsauinfo@fsau.or.ke or look at www.unsomalia.net under the 'FSAU' webpage and Maps.

BARI

In Dharoor FEZ (Bossaso and Iskushuban Districts) the food security situation has improved. During January, light showers fell and substantial *Hais* rains were received in the major grazing lands of Noobir and Haluule. Livestock condition, production and reproduction improved, with the exception of Uur Aleed, where insufficient rains fell. A number of households from Sool of Sanag moved to Noobir last November and their animals are now recovered. In the Sool FEZ (Iskushuban and Bender Beyla Districts) the situation has improved. *Hais* rains fell in the coastal areas (an area where pastoralists move to cope when there is insufficient rainfall) which increased water and pasture availability and alleviated animals concentrated in Carar and Laasabaxay, as animals dispersed to newly-rained-on areas. In the coastal FEZ the food security situation is good. *Hais* rains fell in coastal areas in the 2nd and 3rd dekad. They also fell in the Gagaab FEZ (Kandala District). The Puntland authorities have reversed their decision to limit livestock exports to the Gulf. This has benefited urban groups who depend on port related activities.

SANAAG AND TOGDHEER

The food security situation in these two regions varies from normal (Golis Range) to far below normal in Sool Plateau and Togdheer Region. The part of Sool Plateau which falls in Sanaag Region remains hot and dry although the interventions are helping to alleviate poor food security there. The Hawd of Togdheer is still experiencing the effects of no *Deyr* rainfall and its remaining inhabitants (who have not migrated out) are at risk of food insecurity. Both areas are suffering from reduced milk consumption and milk sales remain almost nil. Pastoralists who migrated from Sool plateau to neighbouring areas in Bari Region and other rangelands near Erivago and Eil-afweyn remain in these areas for better grazing. In Sool Plateau the price of one barrel of water is 2-3 USD, which is abnormally high, and 90% of *berkads* are empty. In the Hawd pastoral zone up to 90% of the *berkads* are empty and water trucking is occurring. There is a huge livestock concentration along the Somalia/Ethiopia border which has resulted in massive overgrazing and water shortages. During January, some rain fell in the Golis ranges of Sanaag and rain was received in the coastal belt of Sanaag Region. Livestock conditions in the Golis range is good and milk availability is normal. The profitable inter-regional trade between Togdheer Region and Puntland has been disrupted by the increasing tension between Somaliland and Puntland. Remittances to the area have increased due to the *Haj* and social support has been observed in drought areas.

NORTH NUGAL AND SOUTH

BARI

During the FSAU rapid assessment in January (as reported in the highlights and page 2) the FSAU found that immediate emergency assistance is required for an estimated 6,200 people in Lower Nugal to preserve livelihoods. For more information on Nugal FEZ and Hawd FEZ see the article on Page 2. Localized *Deyr* rains refilled only 10-15% of *berkads* in the Sool FEZ. Rains fell, however, in Iskushuban District, attracting a huge influx of animals from the drought-stricken areas of Sanaag, Nugal and Bari. The high concentration of livestock is causing an early depletion of pasture and an increase in disease outbreaks. Late *Deyr* rains fell in the coastal areas of Iskushuban, Beyla, the Dharoor basin and parts of Sanaag, so pastoralists have moved from Sool FEZ of Gardo to these areas where they are now located. The condition of sheep and goats has improved, while cattle and camel have not done so well due to the cumulative effects of drought. In the Sool of Dangoroyo (Iyah eco-zone) late *Deyr* rains fell in Iyah eco-zone and the coastal areas of Dangoroyo and Eil which attracted a huge in-migration from Lower Nugal, Hawd and Addun. The indigenous population and early in-migrants benefited but the late arrivals are not benefiting. There is an acute water shortage in the area due to the deaths of pack camels. Pastoralists are dependent on water tankers now and one drum of water costs 70,000 Ssh instead of the normal 10,000 Ssh.

SOOL REGION

Sool Plateau remains in an emergency situation. Pasture continues to dwindle following huge livestock concentrations on patchy rained grazing sites. Water availability in the coming months of the hot, dry *Jilaal* season requires close monitoring. The FSAU field monitor reports that the Aurbogays well is in urgent need of repair. As reported in the highlights and on page 2, the situation in the Lower Nugal of Taleh District can be described as an emergency. This area missed out on the *Deyr* rain that fell in the 1st dekad of December. Most livestock have migrated out to the Hawd and Upper Nugal. The area now hosts a number of highly food insecure groups, mainly destitute households, urban poor and women and children left behind by their out-migrated families. In contrast the Upper Nugal Valley is enjoying a normal food security situation. The Hawd eco-zone of Las Anod, which benefited from late *Deyr* rains, is now hosting a large number of livestock, and pastoral conditions in this area are close to normal for this month.

NORTH MUDUG AND SOUTH

NUGAL

Significant late *Deyr* rains fell in the first week of December, except in the western part of Jariban. These rains improved water and pasture availability but run-off water in villages bordering Ethiopia in Burtinle district actually destroyed some property. Generally, livestock condition has improved and camel milk production has increased, normalizing the price of camel milk. The area has received an abnormally high number of internal immigrants from Nugal who have brought animals to the area using trucks. Southern Addun has experienced insecurity and camel looting, both of which are causing anxiety. The western part of Jariban remains dry and most of the pastoralists have migrated out with their herds. The price of water in this area is high and has to be trucked long distances.

NORTH WEST & AWDAL

During January, above normal rainfall was received in the coastal belts and, according to elders, it has been the best *Hais* rainy season for eight years. Pasture, grazing and browse conditions were above normal. As expected, during the first week of January, households arrived from Shinile zone of Ethiopia's Region V (only 10-15% of the number that arrived in January 2003) but the condition of their animals is normal and relations with local people are good. Milk production in the pastoral zone is very good. Agro-pastoral areas of the region received unusual rainfall in January in Borama and Baki Districts. Most farmers were busy threshing, sacking and transporting their crops and the rain meant that these activities stopped for two days. Otherwise, there is good pasture availability and livestock condition is normal. No animal diseases have been reported. In the highland pastoral zone the situation is normal to above normal. Some rainfall was received in January which improved pasture, grazing and browse as well as water accessibility and availability. Animals have arrived from Ethiopia's Region V and some have started to make their way to the coastal belt. In the Hawd Pastoral Food Economy Zone, (Hawd of Somaliland and Region V) rain fell on the 15th and 16th of January, improving pasture and water conditions. In terms of livestock migration, some animals have moved to the highlands while others have advanced towards coastal and sub-coastal belts. Livestock condition in the area is normal and no diseases are reported. Urban purchasing power increased as inhabitants benefited from activities surrounding the Eid festival, including increased remittances from the diaspora.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS

JUBA VALLEY

In general the food security situation is good. The overall weather conditions are usual for the *Jilaal* season, dry and windy, which has started to dry up catchments. Animal health across the region is good with good reproduction and production. The live-stock price has improved compared to last month. Pasture and grazing is available and accessible although livestock have started to move to water points due to the heat. In the main crop producing areas of Jamame and Jilib Districts, maize has been particularly badly affected by the hot temperatures. In western areas of Buaale, where insecurity is prevailing, availability of and accessibility to pasture and water is poor and livestock movement restricted. Many malnourished children (mostly Bantus) along the river are attending the Mareeray MSF Therapeutic Feeding Centre. Households in this area tend to sell their household stocks early and often acquire shortfalls before the next harvest. These households do not own livestock. These communities have been consistently affected by poor malnutrition over several seasons. FSAU will further investigate and since it seems to be a chronic ongoing problem will look ahead to decide how best to move forward on a long term strategy.

BAY

Food security conditions are normal due to good *Deyr* harvest prospects. Unusual rains were received during January. The rainfall covered most of the region although the intensity and duration varied from one district to another. Early planted crops are at maturity stage, while late planted crops are at grain filling stage. Some insect damage has been observed. Livestock movement has been occurring and there has been increased migration of animals from Bakol region which received poor rains in both *Gu* 2003 and *Deyr* 2003/2004.

MIDDLE SHABELLE

No rains were received during the month and hot weather prevailed, indicating the start to the dry *Jilaal* season. The food security situation is normal. Pasture, grazing and water availability is good. Agricultural activities such as harvesting maize and sesame in irrigated areas are progressing. Sorghum will be harvested at the end of January/beginning of February. The supply of sorghum and maize in markets has slightly decreased which has led to a 10% price increase for maize and 5% price increase for sorghum compared to last month. Household cereal stocks in the irrigated areas are good while in the rain fed areas, they are lower due to previous crop failure and poor production prospects in the *Deyr* harvest. Food insecure households are overcoming the problem by moving to riverine areas for agricultural employment.

BAKOL

No rainfall was received during the month which is normal for *Jilaal*. The overall crop condition is very poor in Bakol due to insufficient rainfall during the *Deyr* season. Little sorghum is expected, particularly from Raddhure and Huddur, where germination has been poor, and production prospects are virtually nil. Household cereal stocks are low or non-existent, particularly amongst the poor. Coping mechanisms are operational (for the poor) to cover the shortfalls. Pasture and grazing conditions are considered below normal. Livestock have migrated to Bay and neighboring areas in search of pasture and water. Cereal availability in the market is good but prices are gradually increasing due to the anticipated crop failure.

GEDO

Pasture and water availability is good due to recent rains in the area and this availability is expected to last through the *Jilaal*. Livestock condition and production is good which is mainly attributed to the increase in camel and cattle reproduction during the *Deyr*. This *Jilaal* is not seen as being as harmful as some *Jilaal* seasons and it has been given a good name by local communities, Ina-Adeer *Jilaal* (Cousin *Jilaal*) or the harmless *Jilaal*. In the southern part of the region a riverine harvest of maize is underway and in Bardera the price of maize has actually fallen. The sorghum harvest is expected to take place in the first dekad of February. In the northern part of Gedo Region, *Deyr* rains significantly improved pasture and animal condition and production. However the rain-fed crops suffered insufficient rainfall which will affect crop production in this area. There are reports of increased malnutrition amongst populations in Belet Hawa, see page 4 'Highlights from Nutrition Update' and the FSAU is investigating.

LOWER SHABELLE

Harvesting of early planted maize is in progress and late planted maize is performing well. However, moisture stress has been noted in rain fed maize areas. The sorghum crop has been affected by heavy winds and has forced some farmers to sell their crops for livestock feed. Irrigated sesame is doing well while rain fed sesame has been affected by moisture stress. The poor groups in rain dependent areas have not yet recovered from a cereal shortfall but they are managing to access food through agricultural employment and the collection of bush products. They can also sell milk and rely on loans. The poor groups in irrigated and agro pastoral areas benefited from improved cereal availability. The price of maize has increased in markets by 10-15%. Pasture availability in riverine areas is normal but competition from animals from neighbouring regions is apparent.

HIRAN

The food security situation has improved across the region due to the onset, albeit late, of *Deyr* rains. These rains resulted in a quick regeneration of browse everywhere, providing camels and goats with better grazing. Milk production has increased resulting in the reduction of milk prices and improved livestock condition and health. It is forecast that the pastoral population of the region will be food secure and will be able to make it through the hard period of *Jilaal* unassisted. There are no rain-fed crops in Hiran this season. Although the *Deyr* rains were below normal this season, and it was not possible to have rain fed crops, the riverine communities had the opportunity of planting irrigated crops, particularly some of the middle and better off groups. The agro-pastoral communities are the most food insecure since they depend on cattle and rain-fed crops.

GALGADUD

The late *Deyr* rains in December improved the availability of water and pasture, except in some pockets in Adaado and Abudwaq. There have been no rains in January as expected given that the *Jilaal* season has begun. Improved livestock condition has led to increased milk and meat consumption; however poor urban households, who have been affected by insecurity, are having problems accessing food. Income opportunities for the Ciid pastoralists have improved because of the *Haj* and increased livestock demand, however the Addun pastoralists are not benefiting so much because of the remoteness of the area. ICRC distributed household items to IDPs in El Bur and Dhusamareb, who had been displaced by conflicts in these areas. However, its reported that IDPs in Abduwaq are still in need of assistance. Insecurity in the area remains a major constraint to improving the food security situation of the area.

COWPEA BELT

The general situation is near normal due to the availability of food, water, pasture and livestock products. Harvesting of cowpea and sorghum is taking place in some districts, however cowpea production was badly affected by the short *Deyr* rains and production is expected to be below normal in Ad-nayabal, Adale, Elder, Galhareri and Harardere to Hobyo. Household cereal stocks are normal and pastoralists are taking advantage of an increase in demand for their animals due to the *Haj*. This area has, however, experienced poor rainfall over several seasons and the *Deyr* 2003/2004 was also poor. The FSAU field monitor in the region reports that the main coping mechanism has been the selling of animals, particularly for the *Haj* (up to half the livestock population along the six cowpea belt districts). This disposal of assets will have long term food security consequences particularly if *Gu* season rainfall is poor.