

EDITORIAL

Food security in Somalia was enhanced by the above-average *Deyr* harvest in Southern Somalia but close surveillance of food availability and access is still critical in both Gedo Region in the southwest and Awdal Region in the northeast. Good *Gu* rains began in Somaliland, Puntland and parts of Southern Somalia, improving water supplies and regenerating pastures. These rains have subsequently benefited livestock condition and production. However, increasing insecurity in Gedo is of great concern as it has the potential to cause further disruption to essential emergency food relief interventions in the area.

FSAU REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

- ? *Food Security Workshop for NGOs has been postponed, as the venue, Merka is currently inaccessible.*
- ? *FSAU-FEWS NET Market Enumerators Workshop is due to be held in Hargeisa in May.*
- ? *FSAU Gu Crop Establishment activities commence May 25th.*
- ? *FSAU FOCUS : Southern Somalia – Deyr Crop Assessment . 2001-2002*
- ? *FSAU –FEWS NET : A Rapid Assessment Report : The Recent Insecurity in Northern Gedo : Food Security Implications.*

HIGHLIGHTS

NORTHERN GEDO : The recent outbreak of fighting has caused serious large-scale internal displacement and a flood of refugees to Mandera (up to 10,000– UNHCR on 13/05/2002) in Kenya and Dolow in Ethiopia. Most households in Northern Gedo rely heavily on food relief. Other main food sources are purchased food, milk consumption and social support. About half of household's cereal consumption is provided by relief food, the other half being purchased. The last food aid distribution took place in late March/early April. If the main food aid organisations (WFP and CARE) continue to be unable to reach the area to provide this assistance, reduced intake will be quickly reflected in deteriorating nutritional status of children living in the region and will become even more critical than it already is. Insecurity has also seriously disrupted the delivery of vital health and selective feeding interventions.

RAINFALL : Heavy rains were received during the 2nd and 3rd dekad of April throughout Somalia. Pasture improved substantially. Flood risk will have to be closely monitored in the Shabelle and Juba basins.

CROP ESTABLISHMENT IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA : Last year's *Gu* cropping season failed in the main rain-fed producing zones of southern Somalia (very poor sorghum harvest). This year, the good start of the *Gu* rains is promising for the high potential sorghum areas in Bay/Bakol. The month of May will be crucial for good crop performance. Conditions have also been favorable for gravity irrigation (mainly maize). In northern Gedo, both rain-fed and irrigated agricultural activities have been hampered by increased insecurity. Replanting will be needed in parts of Lower Juba where crops were washed away.

Conclusions drawn from the Household Food Access and Use Survey Luuq District, Gedo Region (18-26 March 2002)

The Household Food Access and Use Survey was carried out in Luuq district by FSAU in conjunction with CARE and FEWS NET between 18-26 March 2002. It has been well-documented that options for gaining access to food in Gedo have become very restricted. The main objective of the survey was to quantify some of these food access options. The survey found that the majority of households are now dependent on relief and on purchased food. Only a minority of households (11%) had sufficient quantities of their own milk. When the survey was being carried out the availability of food staples in the market was good and prices were reasonable. Low purchasing power was obviously the key problem. Being in the middle of the dry *Jilal* season, opportunities to sell good quality livestock were not available and employment opportunities were scarce. The Assessment found that

coverage of the March distributed relief food had been very good (88%) and few households were receiving unnecessary double rations. **According to the survey, food relief was providing an average of 35% of an individual's energy requirements for a thirty day period (most distributions are spaced at greater intervals). About 2/3 of the households had no access to milk neither through purchase, nor through own production. Except for the better-off, the balance cannot easily be made up through purchases.** Therefore, food relief is barely adequate **even if it is regularly delivered.** If insecurity and operational problems extend to the period between distributions, this amount is surely insufficient for survival. Either more food per household or more regular distributions would go a lot further toward ensuring that people have adequate food intake.

Highlights from the FSAU 'Nutrition Update'

The focus of grave concern cannot move from Gedo Region while insecurity and impassable roads continue to threaten the delivery of essential food aid and other services.

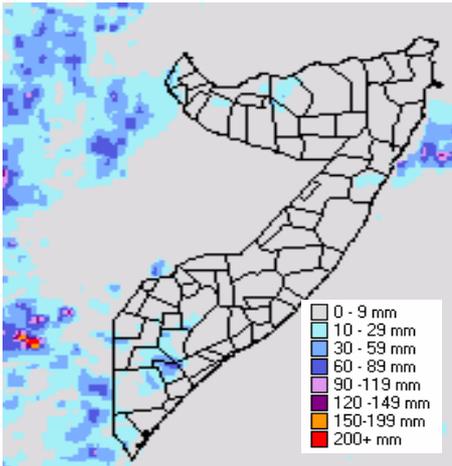
Meanwhile, reports from nutrition surveys in Kenya Somalia border areas and in IDP camps along the Ethiopian border also show unacceptably high malnutrition rates .

Preliminary results from assessments in Somaliland and Puntland demonstrate how strong coping mechanisms in some areas are helping the population to overcome temporary episodes of food insecurity.

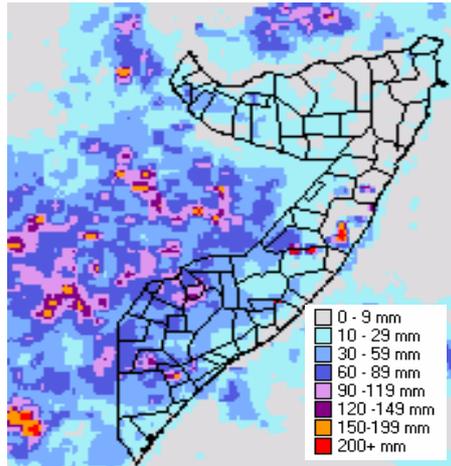
For more details, see the April and May 2002 issues of 'Nutrition Update', or contact noreen.prenville@fsau.or.ke



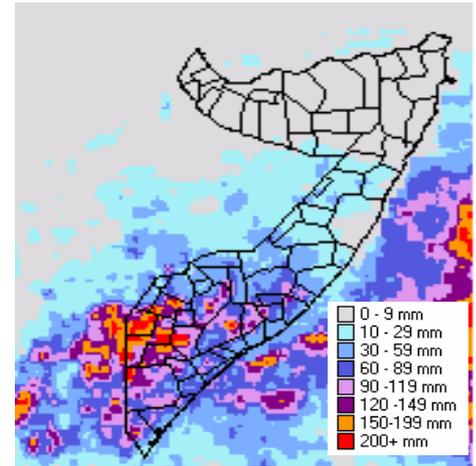
HEAVY RAINS IN SOMALIA & IMPLICATIONS



1-10 April 2002



11-20 April 2002

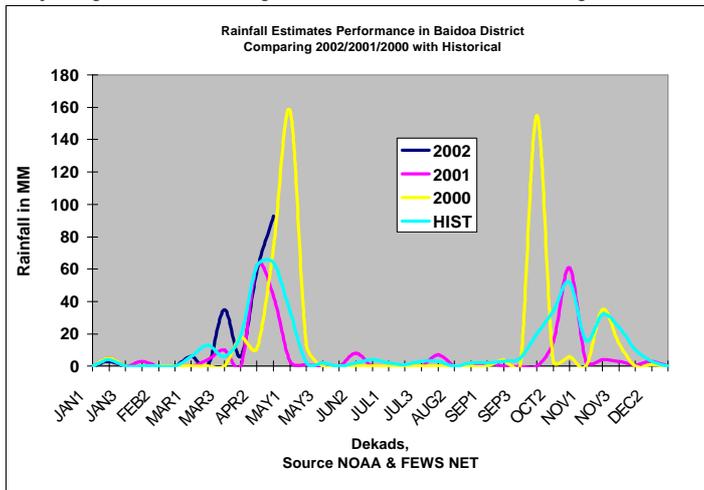


21-30 April 2002

RAINFALL SITUATION IN SOMALIA

The main rainy season in Somalia, commonly known as the *Gu* season, usually starts in April. *Gu* rains are always extremely important for pasture recovery as well as for crop establishment and sometimes critical for food insecure population groups. Although some showers were already received by the end of March, satellite imagery shows that very little rainfall was recorded during the first dekad of April. The *Gu* 2002 rainy season effectively started in the second dekad of April (11-20). Field trip reports confirmed the very good start of the *Gu* rains after the 15th of April in most parts of southern Somalia and particularly along the Ethiopian and Kenya borders. Good rains (2nd dekad) were received in the north of Gedo, the northwest of Bay, the west of Bakol (2nd dekad) as well as in Middle Juba. During the same period of time, good rains were also observed in the northwest of Somalia and in parts of the Central regions.

During the 3rd dekad of April (21-30), heavy rains were reported in most parts of southern Somalia (intensity significantly higher than during the second dekad with a better coverage). The highest rainfall was observed in Middle and Lower Juba, Gedo and Bay regions. The sorghum belt benefited from good rains.



The time series analysis of rainfall, based on the satellite imagery, shows that Baidoa district in Bay region received above normal *Gu* rainfall (slightly above the *Gu* 2000 level, see chart above). In Baidoa town, FSAU's rain gauge recorded 235 mm during April, which is well above the long-term average (150 mm). In Huddur town, about 110 mm were recorded (close to the long-term average).

GU RAINS AND LIVESTOCK RECOVERY

Gu rains started on time in most parts of Somalia. The water situation for both human and livestock consumption has dramatically improved in April all over Somalia. Livestock is recovering in most of the places that had been affected by long dry spells in the northern regions as well as in the southern regions. However, in spite of the good start of the *Gu* rains, it is premature to assume that this will have a long lasting positive impact on pasture regeneration. Though April usually represents the peak of the *Gu* rains in southern Somalia, substantial rains are normally expected in May. Pastoralists of north Gedo have experienced substantial asset losses in the recent past (successive rain failures, insecurity, human displacements and out-migration of large livestock). As a result of the heavy rains, pasture conditions have substantially improved in Gedo. However, most of the livestock did not return back to their traditional grazing areas due to the increasing insecurity. On the other hand, the condition of the remaining animals in north Gedo is slightly improving (free grazing as opposed to hand-feeding).

The month of May will even be more crucial for pastoralism in northern Somalia (unlike southern Somalia, historical rainfall data are higher for May than for April). In the eastern part of Sanag, which was one of the worst drought affected areas, camel and goats are now benefiting from better browsing opportunities while fodder regeneration is still not adequate for cattle/ sheep grazing (regeneration in progress). It is also worth noting that heavy rainfall might result in localized cases of livestock death (especially for the livestock weakened by the prolonged dry spell in Gedo, eastern Sanag, Sool and parts of Awdal). Due to parasite infestations, livestock are always more susceptible to simple respiratory infections like pneumonia at the onset of the rainy season.

GU RAINS AND CROP ESTABLISHMENT

The *Gu* rains usually concentrate in April/May in southern Somalia with April being the wettest month of the year. As opposed to last year, the good start of the *Gu* 2002 rains was particularly favorable to rain-fed crop establishment. Conditions for gravity irrigation were also good. Water was in excess in parts of Lower Juba where crops were washed away by the end of the month (replanting necessary). Near normal to above normal rains are forecasted in May. In north Gedo, agricultural activities have been hampered by insecurity.

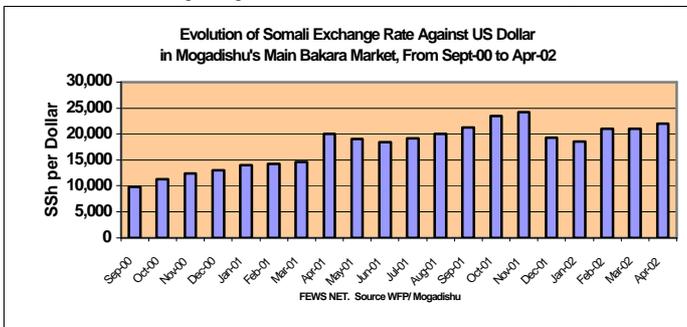
FLOOD RISK

In addition to the extensive heavy rainfall that has been recorded throughout Somalia in the second half of April, very heavy rainfall was also confirmed over the southern highlands of Ethiopia. River levels rose significantly in both Juba and Shabelle basins. In April, localized flooding was reported in Lower Juba, Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle regions. Given the rainfall situation, the extent of flood inundations is likely to increase in May.

MARKET SITUATION

Devaluation of Somali shilling

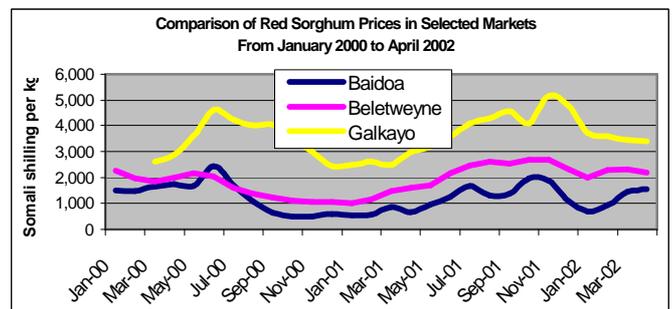
Before the ban, most of the traders were importing their goods through the proceeds of livestock sales (local demand for dollars was limited). Since the imposition of the livestock ban in September 2000, the Somali shilling has gradually been losing value. Between September 2000 and November 2001, the exchange rate deteriorated from 10,000 Ssh/USD to 24-25,000 Ssh/USD in most markets including Mogadishu's main Bakaara market (see chart).



Some Arabic gulf states resumed livestock trade with Somalia. A significant appreciation of the Somali currency was observed in the second half of December 2001 (16-17,000 Ssh/USD from North to South), with the main underlying factor being the temporary lifting of the ban by Yemen. The Somali shilling already started to depreciate again in January 2002. This month of April, the exchange rate was in the range of 21-22,000 Ssh/USD. The cost of imported commodities has increased accordingly. Agricultural inputs such as fuel for pump irrigation are also becoming more expensive.

Local cereal Prices

A slight increase in maize prices has been observed in the main producing zones of Somalia during the first quarter of 2002 (stabilization at about 2,000 Ssh/kg in M. and L. Shabelle, similar to the levels reached last year at the same period). Due to low supply, Afmadow and Hagar in L.Juba showed the highest maize prices of southern Somalia. Sorghum prices dropped prior to the exceptional Deyr 01/02 harvest (800 Ssh/kg in Baidoa) before starting to increase again in February/March, due to the high demand for cereals from Mogadishu. It is worth noting that the difference in prices between the main consumption market (Mogadishu) and the main producing zone (Bay) remained relatively small (1,600 Ssh/kg in Baidoa by the end of March compared to 1,700-1,800 Ssh/kg in Mogadishu). Sorghum prices in Bay decreased significantly in April (less trading activities due to heavy rains/inaccessibility). The good start of the *Gu* rainy season was also a key factor (good crop prospects for rain-fed farmers). Prices in Belet-Weyn and Galkayo are following the same trend as in Baidoa (see chart).



LIVESTOCK EXPORTS TABLE				
BOSSASSO *	January 2002	February 2002	March 2002	April 2002
CAMEL	618	1020	385	1,183
CATTLE	3,540	1738	3977	4,250
SHOATS	159,330	199840	102948	39,780
TOTAL	163,488	202,598	107,310	45,213
BERBERA **	January 2002	February 2002	March 2002	April 2002
CAMEL	1,369	1922	1018	2020
CATTLE	3,324	3468	2390	854
SHOATS	23,000	59349	22932	6,777
TOTAL	27,693	64,739	26,340	9,651

* Source : UNCTAD

** Source : Berbera Port Authority

Reports from the field indicate that the number of livestock exported from Bossasso to the Gulf States increased between January and February 2002, from 163,488 heads in January to 202,598 heads in February, an increase of 24%. This occurred for the following reasons: (1) One of the main livestock traders has shifted his operations from Berbera port in Somaliland to Bossasso, boosting exports from Bossasso. (2) Livestock traders found alternative markets to Saudi Arabia. Egypt is now a large market for big ruminants (camel and cattle) from Bossasso. Yemen and UAE continue to import big ruminants. (3) Traders took advantage of the period leading up to the Hajj to expand and accelerate their export.

Export of sheep and goats from Bossasso dropped by nearly half between February and March because of low demand from overseas markets and instability in the region due to insecurity. Sheep and goat exports from Berbera dropped by more than half. This can be partly explained by the fact that the Hajj period is over. Another factor is that good *Gu* rains started in Ethiopia and as a result some herders in this region do not want to sell their animals. During March, Kismayo port tried to export livestock, particularly camels (400 heads) to Egypt. However, these export activities were interrupted by inter-clan fighting in the region. The animal trade route was diverted to Mogadishu for local consumption.

FOOD AID DISTRIBUTION

NORTHERN GEDO

Luuq, Dolo and Belet Hawa districts urgently require food relief. Distributions, already delayed, look likely to be further disrupted by insecurity. The earliest CARE can get their food into Mandera or El Waq will be in three weeks.

WFP

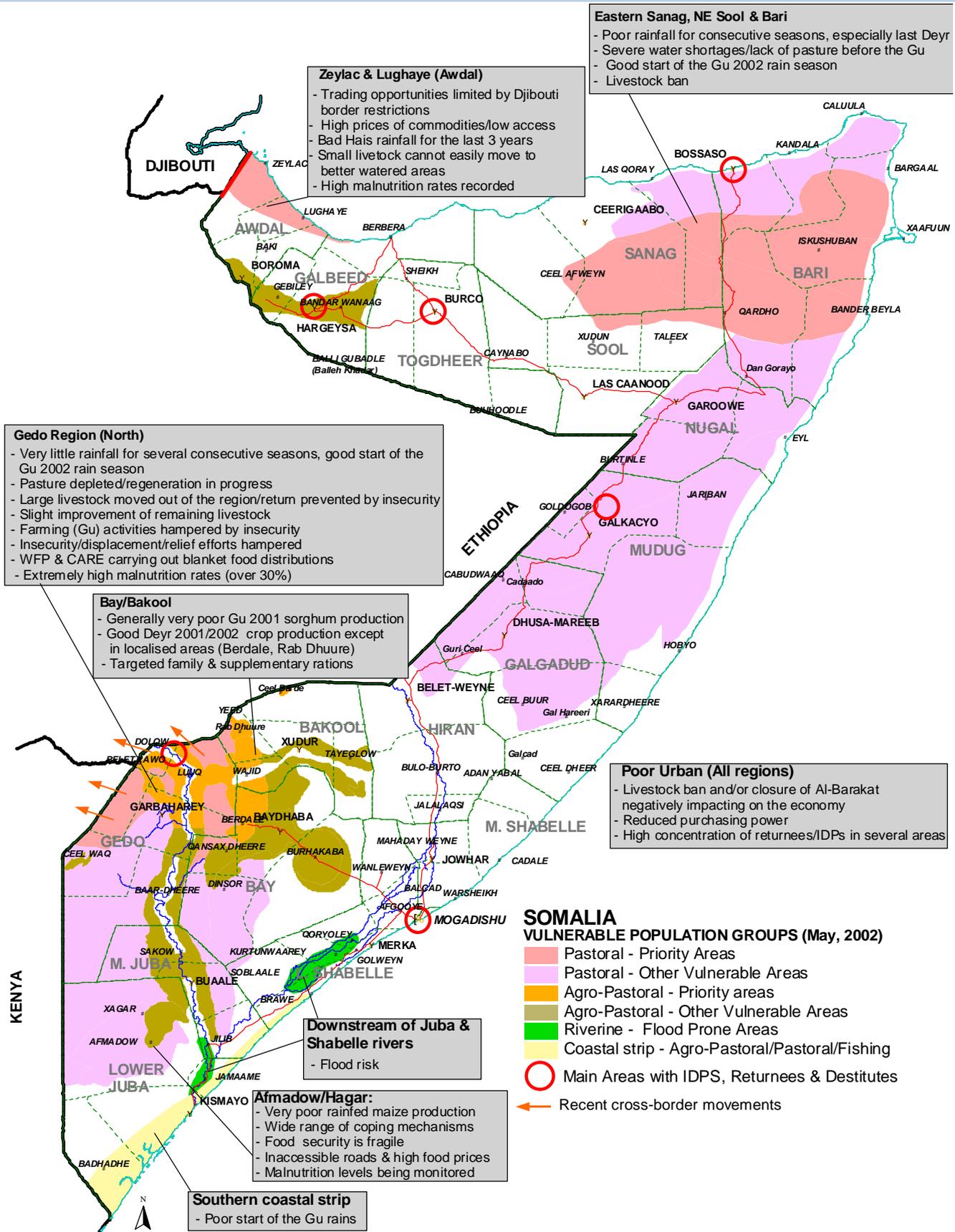
In the month of April WFP distributed a total of 1,711 metric tons of food in Somalia. 1,048 tons were distributed in the relief sector in Gedo (646MT), Bari and East Sanag regions (387MT) and Bay (15MT). The remaining 663 tons were distributed as food for work and in the social support sector. Under food for work, 50 tons were distributed in Bardera district in Gedo, 202 tons in Bay/Bakool, 78 tons in Lower Shabelle, 60 tons in Hiran and 89 tons in the northwest. In the social support sector, 58 MT in Bay and 24 MT in Mogadishu were distributed under maternal-child health centres (MCH) and 102 MT in the northwest in hospital and orphanage feeding.

WFP has already started a dispatch of 750 metric tons of food to Mandera as it plans to carry out food distributions in South Gedo (Burdhubo, Garbaharey and Bardera) as soon as possible. However, due to continuous heavy rains and flooding on some roads, especially from Mombasa to Mandera (Kenya), it will take up to 3 weeks to have the WFP food pre-positioned in Mandera. Furthermore, the heavy rains and insecurity along the road between Al Waq and Garbaharey could delay the start of WFP food distribution in Gedo, which is scheduled at the end of May. **WFP Pipeline:** WFP has a total of 5,249 metric tons of food in stock, in Kenya and Somalia. This is in addition to 11,570 metric tons of food commodities in pledges in the pipeline.

CARE

In the month of April CARE distributed 266 MT of food in Belet Hawa district in Gedo as relief food. Under food for work, in Bay, CARE distributed 160MT in Qansah Dere, 160MT in Baidoa and 160MT in Burhakaba districts. In Bakol and Hiran regions 120MT and 300MT were distributed respectively. **CARE Pipeline:** CARE has approximately 6,500 MT on the high seas. This is relief food for Gedo Region as well as for Food For Work in Hiran, Bay and Bakool Regions. It will be distributed over a period of three or four months.

CURRENT FSAU VULNERABILITY MAP- MAY 2002



In spite of the good start of the *Gu* rains, north Gedo is still the most vulnerable area in Somalia. Recent insecurity has been hampering agricultural/ pastoral activities as well as relief interventions. Relief food remains the main food source in the region. Delivering the appropriate ration on a monthly basis is critical. Compared to the initial 'bad' scenario that was established by FSAU in September/October after the last *Gu* harvest (from *Gu* 2001 to *Gu* 2002 assuming a very poor *Deyr* 01/02 cropping season and abnormally high staple food prices), there has been a slight alleviation of the situation of most agro-pastoralists in Bay, Hiran and to a lesser extent in Bakool regions. *Deyr* 01/02 sorghum yields were very good in general. However, malnutrition rates are still in the range of 15-20% and parts of Bay/ Bakool are still highly vulnerable to food insecurity due to localized *Deyr* crop failures (see map). The flood risk will have to be closely monitored in the downstream of Juba and Shabelle rivers. In the north, the main area of concern is the coastal part of Awdal. Food security is still extremely fragile in Eastern Sanag (promising start of the *Gu* rains, alleviation in progress).

A SUMMARY OF RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT FOLLOWING THE RECENT INSECURITY IN NORTHERN GEDO AND FOOD SECURITY IMPLICATIONS. APRIL 2002

FSAU and FEWS Net conducted a four-day rapid assessment between 23rd-26th April 2002 to investigate the effects on food security of the recent conflict in North Gedo. The assessment confirmed that the recent outbreak of fighting (April 11th-16th) in Luuq, Dolow and Belet Hawa districts has further disrupted people's livelihoods in Northern Gedo. There have also been large-scale population movements from this area, generating IDP's and refugees who have crossed into Kenya (up to 10,000 people from Belet Hawa—reported by UNHCR, 5/5/2002) and into Ethiopia (from Luuq, no numbers yet). Operations have become difficult for aid agencies and this has prompted a scaling down of humanitarian activities—at a time when CARE food relief is providing at least one-third of an individual's energy requirements (if delivered for a thirty day period). Insecurity has also prompted riverine farmers and agro-pastoralists to leave their land holdings. The latest the latter could plant crops and expect a *Gu* harvest is May.

Northern Gedo pastoralists who had left last year in search of

better pasture and water were expected to return at the end of *Jilal*. (March) Their continued absence, attributed to insecurity, has affected family members remaining behind as they don't have good access to livestock and livestock products.

Security does not appear likely to improve due to the prevailing mutual suspicions between the elders of the opposing clans who could otherwise broker a peace deal. Conflict-resolution, involving all stakeholders and including neighbouring countries is therefore vital to achieving lasting peace. A lowering of tensions will create the necessary working environment that will allow aid agencies to distribute food relief and implement emergency humanitarian activities. In the mid- to long- term, efforts should be made to promote stability so that development-orientated projects can be implemented, which will further expand household livelihood options.

For a copy of this report carried out and compiled by M.Y. Aw-Dahir (FSAU), Mahdi Kayad (FSAU), Abdikarin Ismail (FSAU) and Sidow Addou (FEWS NET), please contact alex.williams@fsau.or.ke.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS >> P.5

Every month, the 22 FSAU Field Monitors provide in depth information on food security indicators in their area. If you would like to obtain a copy of their district report - please contact alex.williams@fsau.or.ke. The Regional highlights are a summary of this field information.

NORTH WEST & AWDAL

Despite the early *Gu* rains in most parts of the regions, Zeila and Lughaya still remain areas of concern. Normally, these areas receive rains in the *Hais* season only (Dec-Feb). These rains, coupled with water run-offs from the highlands of the *Ogo* (mountainous rangeland), provide the moisture for pasture regeneration. In other parts, there were scattered *Gu* rains with varying intensities and distribution. Most of the livestock from Galbeed and Awdal were near the coast to benefit from the *Hais*, placing mounting pressure on the already depleted fodder and water, but with the onset of the *Gu*, this has been relieved as livestock moved south to their permanent areas. Overall, with the exception of the coast, water and pasture availability are satisfactory but larger improvement depends upon the duration of the rains, the longer it lasts, the better the situation will be. In agro-pastoral areas, planting has begun, particularly in Gabilay and Borama districts, the best agricultural potential areas of the North.

SANAG & TOGHDEER

Good rains fell during the first *dekad* of April but a few pockets in Eastern Sanag and the *Hawd* of Togdheer did not benefit. The rains were particularly concentrated in the Golis Mountains. However, the main grazing areas of the Sool and Hadeed Plateaux and the Gebi Valley have still not yet recovered and pasture/fodder shortages continue (cattle deaths are still being reported). So livestock production continues to be well below normal and income opportunities are curtailed. Pastoralists are killing off new-born sheep in an effort to conserve pasture, although it is the animal's main breeding season; there is also concern that early *Hagay* winds in June will also destroy most new pasture. Prices remained stable, except for local quality shoats, which increased substantially with the lack of supply associated with seasonal migrations. Exports were strong (considering that it was the period just after the *Hajj*), with buyers from Yemen purchasing goats and new markets being found in Djibouti and Egypt.

SOOL (and the Buhoodle Hawd)

The *Gu* rains started early in April, however they were scattered and broken across the region—satisfactory but not yet sufficient. They did bring relief to the Sool plateau and lower Nugal Valley, areas where water and pasture shortages were cause for growing concern. However, the Hawd of Sool region received very sporadic rain. Berkads in that area were only half-filled. The Hawd of Buhoodle district received good rains which filled the the berkads and ballis. Las Caanod, received very little rain, putting strain on the availability of drinking water. Because of the rainfall patterns, herders moved their animals to nearby areas rather than trekking long distances. Despite the rains, food shortages are expected to persist among the poor households on the Sool Plateau (2,000 households - see previous three months' reports) and food aid is still recommended. Prices of milk fell by 60%, reflecting improved production, although camel calving rates are low and production is not expected to rise any more significantly. Livestock disease, expectedly, increased during this period of rain. Terms of trade are satisfactory and the continuing insecurity in Puntland has hampered trade and movements between the NE and NW.

BARI REGION

There were heavy showers in Bosasso on the 13 April, causing flooding, loss of life and damage to property, including stored food. Rains nevertheless benefited the Kakaar depression area, producing a rapid regeneration of pasture and improved animal condition. Livestock prices were higher (lack of supply), while cereal prices decreased and imported commodities went up in local currency terms and down in US Dollar terms. Labour rates dropped and opportunities are scarce, affecting the urban poor and those without livestock or their own businesses. A cholera outbreak was reported (RMO and HIS officer in Bosasso) following the rains, while a rapid nutrition assessment was conducted from the 18th-21st April with FSAU and MOSA.

SOUTH NUGAL & NORTH MUDUG

At the start of the month, there were light and scattered rains, which became more intense in the third *dekad*. The western regions, mostly in the Hawd, received good rains. There were no significant rains reported in the eastern parts of the Deeh and Addun food economy zones. However, the weather patterns favour good rainfall—high humidity, cloud cover, etc. Livestock condition remains poor, no recovery yet in the parts that received rain, while continued deterioration has been reported in the drier areas. The number of marketable animals in a herd has halved (from 50% to 25%). Improvements are expected in May, especially where rain fell. There are concerns about rainfall shortages this season. There are water shortages in the main towns—especially in Galkacyo and Ba'adweyne—attributed mainly to continued rural-urban drift. The latter has also pushed up unemployment and this is creating food shortages among the urban poor. Market supply has remained normal and terms of trade for pastoralists are good, however increased food commodity prices (attributed to transport difficulties) are further straining households who do not own animals.

NORTH NUGAL & SOUTH BARI

In marked contrast to the droughts experienced in neighbouring areas, this part of Somalia was the victim of sudden and dangerous floods—reportedly there were 16 people killed (source: Garoowe authorities) and some extensive damage to property: 28 houses, 60 huts, 16 horticultural farms, large numbers of fruit trees and over 7,000 livestock (source: Somali Red Crescent Society). Most of the horticultural farm and fruit tree owners were former IDP's who slowly built up their assets. The damage was confined to Garoowe and immediate areas. Elsewhere, Berkads have not yet started refilling and the weather remains overcast while more rains are expected. Prices and ToT increased in favour of pastoralists this month, while investment slowed (affecting work opportunities and trade) due to continued insecurity.

>> P.6 REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS

GEDO

Northern Gedo is still experiencing a severe food crisis due to a combination of adverse factors including drought, lack of pasture, rain-fed crop failure and insecurity. After successive poor rainy seasons, above average *Gu* rains have been received throughout the region in April. Remaining livestock, which have been particularly expensive to maintain during the dry period, are gradually recovering. In spite of the significant improvement in pasture conditions, the large proportion of livestock that out-migrated from the northern districts was prevented from coming back due to insecurity. Increased insecurity also resulted in displacements of people who moved across the border into Kenya/Ethiopia. The deterioration in the security situation has hampered relief interventions as well as farming activities for both riverine and agro-pastoral population groups. Relief food is still the main food source in northern Gedo (last food distribution in late March/early April). In south Gedo, animals were able to return to their traditional grazing areas and riverine farmers started to release maize stocks in order to meet farm labour costs.

HIRAN

Gu rains started around mid-April. Intensity, frequency and coverage were good in general. Browsing conditions improved substantially. On the other hand, pasture regeneration is particularly slow in some pastoral areas (no emergence of grasses yet). Grazing conditions are still poor in the agro-pastoral and riverine areas. Water catchments in remote rangelands were replenished. Seasonal small-scale livestock movements occurred (search of pasture). Land preparation and planting are going on normally in both rain-fed and irrigated zones. River level have been steadily increasing over the past weeks. Thousands of dead fish have been observed along the river without immediate explanation. Following the last *Deyr* harvest, which was well above average, cereal stocks at household level are relatively good. Local cereal prices are stable since the beginning of the year (slightly above 2,000 Ssh/kg for sorghum in Belet-Weyn). The inflow of cereals from Ethiopia is very limited at the moment while there is a high demand for cereals especially from the Central regions.

LOWER SHABELLE

The overall food security situation of the region is normal. Rains started in the second dekad of April, improving water availability and pasture condition. Animals are moving away from the riverine areas. Cattle can still feed on crop stalks from the previous harvest. Agricultural activities have normally started (planting stage). Agricultural related employment is providing substantial income for the poorest wealth groups. Cereal stock at household level is healthy especially for middle and better off wealth groups while the poor in the agro-pastoral and riverine food economy zones are mainly dependent on market purchase. Sorghum prices have been stable, while maize prices showed a slight increase in April. Cholera outbreak has been reported in Brava and Wanlaweyn districts. The river level increased dramatically and has become a threat to many villages in Kurtunwarey district. The flood prone areas of Jennale (Marka district) are also at risk.

BAY

The actual rainfall situation is promising for rain-fed crop production in Bay. *Gu* rains effectively started in the second dekad of April (little rains already received by the end of March). About 235 mm were recorded in Baidoa town in April (compared to about 150 mm in average). Rainfall distribution was exceptionally good throughout the region. After the last very good *Deyr* harvest, there was no lack of cereal seeds. Agricultural employment opportunities are now representing a major source of income for poor households (planting, weeding). Most of the water catchments were replenished and pasture is recovering. Livestock body condition is good. Sorghum prices gradually increased in February/March (high demand from Mogadishu), but are now already decreasing due to a combination of factors (inaccessible trade routes, good crop prospects, small-scale food for work activities going on). Terms of trade are in favour of livestock owners, one local quality goat fetching 4 (50 kg) bags of sorghum. Pastoralists from North Gedo are still present in Q/Dheere and Dinsor districts (coming back prevented by increased insecurity in their traditional grazing areas). Emergency assistance was provided to Offlow zone bordering Baidoa and Q/Dheere (significant asset losses due to clan fighting in March).

BAKOOL

Good rains were received throughout the region starting from the second dekad of April (110 mm in Huddur, which is equivalent to the long-term average). Crop germination has been good in the sorghum high potential areas of Bakol. Water catchments in traditional grazing areas have been replenished. Pasture and browsing conditions improved significantly hence livestock production. Milk supply increased in local markets resulting in relatively low prices (reduced by 30% compared to last month). Limited livestock movements occurred within the region (pastoralists in search of the best grazing areas). Sorghum prices are gradually decreasing but not to the same extent as in Bay (from 105,000 SSh/bag end of March to 85,000 SSh/bag end of April in Huddur). Terms of trade are favourable to livestock owners (about 3 sorghum bags for one local quality goat). Price of imported commodities still remains high due to inflation, high transport cost and levy.

JUBA VALLEY

The *Gu* rains started mid-April throughout Middle and Lower Juba. Rainfall distribution and intensity was fairly normal in general. Pastoralists started their seasonal migration from the riverine areas to inland grazing areas. Gedo pastoralists are starting to move northwards. Compared to other parts of the Juba valley, the start of the *Gu* rains was relatively poor in the coastal areas of Lower Juba (Kismayo, Jamame and Badhadhe districts). Cereal stocks at household level are extremely low for poor agro-pastoralists in Afmadow and Hagar districts (very poor rain-fed maize production for the last two seasons). Although people can rely on a wide range of coping mechanisms, food security is still fragile in those 2 districts. Staple food prices are the highest in Hagar (inaccessible roads, high transport costs). Due to the heavy rains received at the end of the month, crops have been washed away in many places. Replanting will be necessary. Interventions went on in order to prevent further outbreak of cholera.

GALGADUD/COWPEA BELT

In Galgadud, the *Gu* rainy season effectively started in the second dekad of April. Most of the water points were replenished. Water availability was a major constraint for pastoralists during the dry period. In some areas, people and animals have now access to free water. In other areas, water prices went down dramatically (except in Abudwak where high prices are still prevailing). Pasture is fully recovering. Livestock condition is improving and milk prices are decreasing. Rainfall intensity was less in the cowpea belt, which received scattered rains in the second half of the month and where water prices are still high (15-20,000 Ssh/ 200 litres in the inland areas). Usual farming activities are continuing for cowpeas (sowing, replanting). Cereals from the South are available at reasonable prices. Collection and sale of firewood, charcoal, petty trade, remittances, hides and skins and ghee sale are providing income sources for poor pastoralists. Income previously spent on water for livestock is now being switched to food and other household needs.

MIDDLE SHABELLE

Good rains have been received starting from the second dekad of April. Grazing and browsing conditions have greatly improved. This prompted pastoralists to begin their seasonal migration away from riverine areas to avoid tse tse flies and other related livestock diseases. Livestock condition and production have improved dramatically. Milk prices came significantly down (back to their January level). Cereal prices did not increase further in April (about 2,000 Ssh/kg for maize and 1,500 Ssh/kg for sorghum in Jowhar). The local goat/sorghum terms of trade are in the range of 1: 2.5, which is still in favour of livestock owners. Farmers are busy with their seasonal farming activities. Cereal stocks at household level are quite healthy for all wealth groups. Supply in the markets increased with the high seasonal demand for farm labour and tractor hire. High river levels allow extensive gravity irrigation for small scale farmers.