

ISSUED MAY 2003

FSAU acknowledges the contribution of key partners FEWS NET, CARE, WFP, SC-UK, UNCU, UNDP

## FSAU REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

**\*\* FSAU Crop Establishment fieldwork** will begin in Southern Somalia on 25 May. Results will be compiled and discussed in the field before the findings are disseminated in the July Monthly Report. **FSAU non crop seasonal assessment** will be conducted in June, looking at pastoral areas in the North East and North West as well as looking at other areas of Somalia that have been affected by food security 'shocks' such as flooding. For more information please contact : yusuf@fsau.or.ke

**\*\* Mapping of the Pastoral Food Economy Zones for North Somalia** is being finalized following field work involving FSAU field monitors (24 April-5 May) based in the north who undertook the rapid baseline data collection. For more information please contact : Mahdi.kayad@fsau.or.ke

**\*\*FEWS NET** has produced a Vulnerability Update on the March 2003–Clan Conflict which has threatened Food Security in **Buuale**, Middle Juba Region, Somalia. For the report, please contact : mawdahir@few.net.

**\*\* UNCU/OCHA and IDP'S in Kismayo** UNCU/OCHA are investigating IDP'S and other vulnerable groups in Kismayo and FSAU has seconded two field monitors to support this work.

**\*\* Hargeisa Urban Baseline Assessment.** For a copy of this report please contact Somalia@few.net.

**\*\* Consultants working on an FSAU data dictionary** have finished their research and are now preparing the systems analysis report with associated database diagrams. For more information please contact charles@fsau.or.ke

## Food Aid Distribution

In April **CARE** distributed a total of 1,772 MT in Gedo region to 35,440 beneficiaries. 726 MT was distributed in Belet Hawa, 315 MT was distributed in Dolow and 731MT was distributed in Luuq district. All these were free food distributions and consisted mainly of sorghum. There is still approximately 300 MT of food relief in the pipeline for Gedo region, distribution is expected to take place in May.

**WFP** distributed 860 MT during April. 197 MT of food relief was distributed in W/Galbeed (Hargeisa) and 3 MT in Bari. The total for rehabilitation and food for work was 308 MT; 130 MT was distributed in the north, 146 MT in the North West and 32 MT in the North East. 350 MT was social support, 180 MT was distributed in the south, 60 MT in the North west and 108 MT in the north East.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**CONCERN OVER FLOODING IN THE JUBA AND SHABELLE RIVER BASINS** : As a result of heavy rain in the Ethiopian highlands and Somalia, localized and destructive flooding is occurring in the Juba and Shabelle river basins, endangering the food security of people living there. In Middle Shabelle, there has already been localized flooding in Jowhar District and in Lower Shabelle, the villages of Qoryoley, Kurtuwarey and Merca have been affected. In Juba Valley, Buuale has also experienced flooding while Jilib and Jammame districts are still at risk. It should be noted that in the *Jillal* season, farmers often break the river banks to flood farmlands which is likely to increase the current flood risk and that comprehensive maintenance of river banks and the de-silting of riverbeds would go some way to reduce the impact of small scale localised and destructive floods. For more details contact abdinasir.sobe@fsau.or.ke and Somalia@few.net

**ONSET OF GU RAINY SEASON** : The *Gu* rains have commenced throughout Somalia, except in some pastoral pockets in northern and central Somalia, where no rain has fallen yet. See Vulnerability map and Regional Highlights for more details. If the *Gu* rains are delayed, most areas will recover. However, the vulnerable groups in these areas, whose assets have been reduced, such that further losses are likely to cause destitution, will be hit hard by the higher than normal increase in livestock mortality. Increased livestock mortality often occurs when rains come after a long dry period and is particularly serious for poorer groups.

**FOOD INSECURITY IN SOOL PLATEAU** : The Sool Plateau in the north of Somalia continues to be an area of concern following a serious delay in the onset of *Gu* rains. Insufficient water had already caused migration amongst the better off groups living on the high plateau, leaving behind people who had inadequate resources to move out of the area. Those who remained have had to pay high prices to purchase water while they struggle to find markets for their weakened animals. See page 3 and Regional Summary for Sanaag and Togdheer.

**ETHIOPIAN PASTORALISTS LEAVE AWDAL REGION** : Most of the remaining Shinnile pastoralists returned to Ethiopia in April (where good rains are reported in Shinnile zone). According to WFP Ethiopia, the physical situation of the livestock returning to Ethiopia is very poor. Heavy rainfall occurred in the Awdal highlands and lighter rain fell in the Guban, along the coast.

## Highlights from the FSAU 'Nutrition Update'

The FSAU conducted a rapid nutrition assessment commencing in May. A nutrition strategy meeting was held in Hud-dur from March 31<sup>st</sup> to April 2<sup>nd</sup>, during which the nutritional status of under five children in the camps since the previous rapid assessment in November 2002. Over-crowding, poor sanitation, low uptake of health services despite close proximity and inadequate income opportunities were reported as major concerns amongst the IDP population in Kismayo. A nutrition survey by UNICEF, in collaboration with the FSAU and other partners is now underway in Kismayo and results are expected to provide a better understanding of the population's nutritional status. United Nations Somalia Co-ordination Unit (UNCU) and partners also plan a study of the situation in Kismayo.

Partners continue to explore feasible and sustainable interventions. Meanwhile, family rations will continue to be provided to families with malnourished children in Belet Weyne until a detailed assessment is undertaken to help understand the reasons for the continued increase in admissions of malnourished children to the SFP.

**For copies of nutrition survey reports and further information related to nutrition, see the FSAU monthly publication 'Nutrition Update' or contact : noreen.prendiville@fsau.or.ke**



The FSAU is funded by the EC and implemented by FAO.

Further information is available through PO Box 1230, Nairobi, Tel: (254-2) 3741299, 3745734, 3748297, Fax: 3740598, E-mail: fsauiinfo@fsau.or.ke, or look at [www.unsomalia.org](http://www.unsomalia.org) under the 'FSAU' webpage.

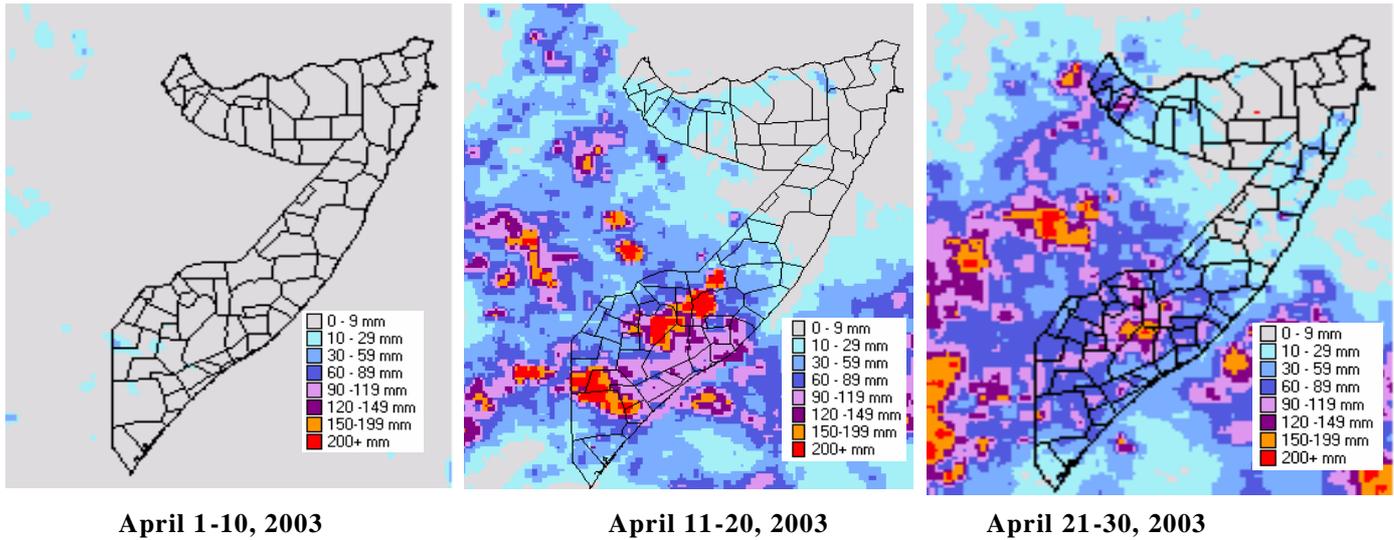


The FSAU Nutrition component is funded by USAID.

While all efforts have been made to utilize the most accurate data and information available, neither FSAU, FEWS Net or any of their supporters or partners endorse any figure or political boundary as definitive.



FIG 1. REVIEW OF THE ONSET OF THE 2003 GU RAINY SEASON

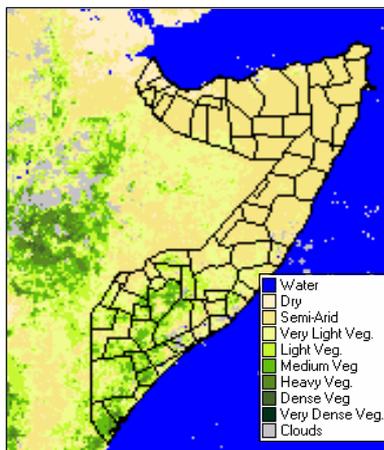


Source: FEWS NET/Somalia

**Rains:** The much-awaited *Gu* rains started in late April in most regions. In the first dekad (April 1-10) there was virtually no rainfall in most of Somalia, with the exceptions of a few pockets in Gedo and Lower Juba regions. The relatively poor *Gu* rains during the first dekad of April created a climate of uncertainty among farmers in southern Somalia. This uncertainty was dispelled when heavier rains fell over parts of southern Somalia during the second dekad of April, easing dryness and restoring soil moisture. According to satellite data, rains in excess of 200 mm fell over most parts of Lower and Middle Juba, Bay and Bakool Regions. Heavy rains were also reported in some areas of Hiran, Lower and Middle Shabelle. In contrast, only lighter rains were recorded in parts of Galgaduud, Mudug, Nugal, and Somaliland (Togdheere, Awdal and Waqooyi Galbed) regions. In the third dekad, most parts of southern Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland received above-normal rainfall. FSAU Field Monitor reports have also confirmed these heavy rains. However, most parts of Sanaag, Sool and Bari regions remained dry throughout April.

**Vegetation and Crops :** Reflecting the late start to the *Gu* rains, vegetation levels, as indicated by NDVI, appeared well below normal for the time of the year, with the exceptions of parts of Lower and Middle Juba Regions. Pasture and vegetation conditions are likely to improve throughout most of Somalia in the weeks ahead, following the recent rains.

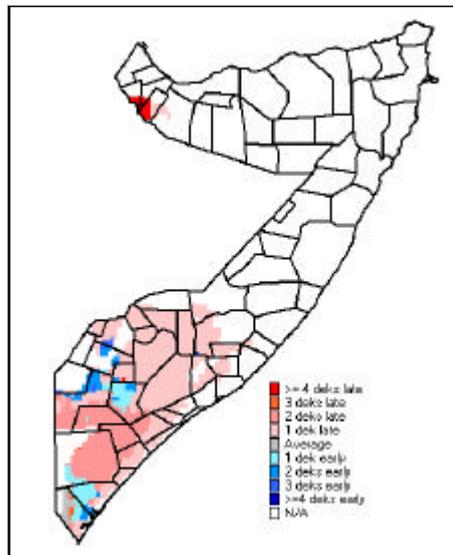
Fig 2. Vegetation dekad three April 21-30, 2003



**Crop performance :** The cropping season started twenty days late in the rain-fed agricultural regions of Middle and Lower Juba. It was only ten days late in much of Bay, Bakool, Gedo and Hiran. See Figure 3. FSAU Field Monitors also report that most farmers started planting their crops in late April.

The *Gu* season contributes 70-80 percent of annual production for rain-dependent farmers, making it a particularly important season. Most farmers sow relatively drought-tolerant crops such as sorghum, cowpeas and finger millet. Some farmers also rely on rainfall from Ethiopia, because the eastern and southeastern highlands of Ethiopia drain into the Juba and Shabelle Rivers, supporting irrigation along these rivers, where maize is grown.

Fig 3. Crop start of season anomaly Map, April 21-30



**River Levels :** Although the *Gu* rains started late in Somalia, more recent and heavy rains in the Ethiopian highlands brought excess waters to the Juba and Shabelle, increasing the risk of flooding. CARE Somalia who monitor the river levels on a daily basis, reports that both rivers are rising to dangerous levels, with some stations recording high cresting levels. The FSAU field monitors corroborate these reports, claiming that the Juba River

is almost at full capacity in Luuq town and has overflowed onto farms in the Burdubo area. The Juba River is also swollen in Bardera, where farmers are starting to worry about possible flooding. Farmers who own irrigation pumps have already dismantled them in the riverine areas of Bardera and Sakow, fearing that the pumps could get washed away. In the first week of May, the Shabelle River was extremely full near Belet Weyne and heavy rains had been reported in the Jalalaqi and Belet Burte areas. The high water crest in Belet Weyne will reach downstream Shabelle areas in less than one week, where the risk of flooding, particularly in Jowhar and Afgoi, is high. A recent report from CARE indicates that significant flood damage has already occurred in large areas of agricultural land in Lower Juba, causing loss of grain stored in traditional underground pits. FEWS NET is also reporting that flooding in Somalia could persist or worsen during the coming weeks. As part of contingency planning, the SACB Flood Working Group recommended that CARE should continue to monitor the river levels daily and issue an alert, as necessary, of possible flooding in the Juba and Shabelle River areas. The Flood Working Group also agreed to reactivate the previous monitoring systems along the rivers, choosing CARE as the focal point for data collection and dissemination. The FAO Water and Land information project will not start to operate until June. For more information contact [abdinasir.sobe@fsau.or.ke](mailto:abdinasir.sobe@fsau.or.ke) or [Somalia@fews.net](mailto:Somalia@fews.net).

**FOOD INSECURITY CONTINUES IN SOOL PLATEAU DUE TO THE DELAYED ONSET OF GU RAINS**

**Update as of May 7**—Parts of the Sool Plateau received heavy rainfall recently, spelling an end to the long dry season; however, with this rain comes an increased likelihood of animal mortality as the animals have been weakened by the long *Jilaal*. The situation for poor households, who were not able to migrate out of this high plateau, continues to remain tenuous. During the long dry period their cash and assets resources were drawn down on to pay for the high cost of water for both human and livestock consumption. Persistent drought for three years has decreased the number of animals in their herds and has lessened their ability to cope with the usually long dry season. Milk yields are down because of poor grazing, and newborn animals are suffering as a result.

Meanwhile, when the rains did not arrive, middle and better-off wealth groups on the Sool plateau were able to use their resources to transport their livestock and households out of the region to areas where they could find water.

According to the FSAU baseline survey, conducted in early 2002, the population of the Plateau is estimated at around 150,000, of which 85-90% are pastoralists and 10-15% are urban people. The area is a potentially good grazing area and can sustain a high livestock population. Historically, the Plateau was used only as a wet season grazing area, however, an increasing number of livestock and human population over the last two decades has led to a proliferation of *berkads* and an increase in water availability, converting the Sool Plateau into a year round grazing area and attracting a relatively higher concentration of livestock, mainly shoats (sheep and goats) and camels.

In the recent past, several successive rainy season failures (*Gu* 2001, *Deyr* 2001/02 and *Gu* 2002) resulted in poor pasture, decreasing livestock productivity. The continuing livestock import ban by the Persian Gulf States contributed to an increased livestock population and resulted in overgrazing.

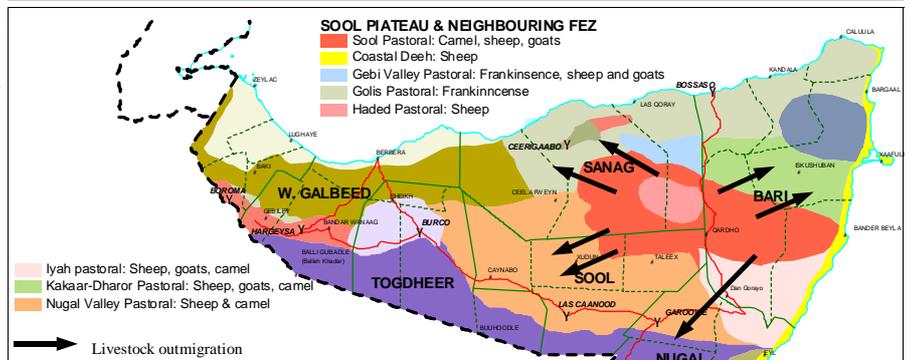
Below normal rains in most parts of Sool plateau during the 2002 *Gu* season (April-June) aggravated the situation. It is still not known whether the recent rains on the plateau will be enough to alleviate the situation of the remaining households. The FSAU will continue to monitor.

In the meantime the FSAU Sool Field Monitor has suggested the following interventions for further discussion in the SACB arena :

- (1) Food Relief for the poorest groups
- (2) Water interventions, including the provision of fuel for water trucking, free water trucking (where necessary) and rehabilitation of strategic boreholes.

For more background and analysis see FSAU Monthly Reports for February 2002 and September 2002. Contact alex.Williams@fsau.or.ke for the FSAU Assessment of the Drought Situation in Sool Region (April 2003). There is also a food security and nutrition report. UNCU is planning on organizing an inter-agency assessment to the area.

**FIG 4 : VULNERABILITY IN SOOL PLATEAU**



**MARKET PRICES**

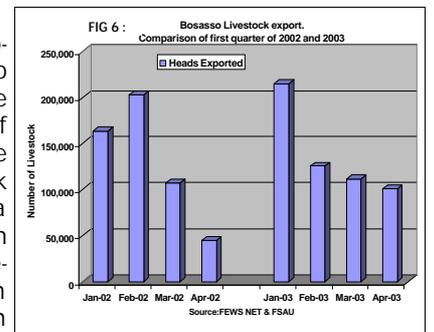
With the *Gu* harvest still several months away, retail cereal prices have increased during April. This is typical of the seasonal trend. Major price increases, especially for maize, occurred in Jowhar and Merka, which are high potential production areas for maize. Average retail maize prices jumped by 5 percent from Ssh 2,300 per kilo in March to Ssh 2,400 in April. Similarly, maize prices increased in other markets in Southern Somalia such as Bardera in Gedo Region. In the central rangelands (the Pastoral food economy in Mudug) cereal retail prices are also higher compared to last month. (See Figure 5). Even though the *Deyr* harvest was exceptionally good, market prices did initially drop in January 03 which reflected this, but with the onset of the dry season they started to rise again and particularly because there was high demand for cereals from the pastoralist communities of Central Somalia.

However in some isolated markets in Baidoa and Bakol located in the high potential sorghum belt, insecurity has increased local cereal stock availability and sorghum prices are actually lower compared to this time last year.



**LIVESTOCK EXPORT IMPROVES DESPITE LIVESTOCK BAN**

Traders from Somaliland/Puntland have negotiated with Saudi and Egyptian traders to increase livestock export numbers and some have even managed to export more to the Gulf in January 2003—just before the Hajj. See Livestock Figures for January in Livestock Export Table below. The graph (Fig 6) shows a comparison of export figures between Jan– April 2002 and 2003. Prior to the livestock ban, the number of animals exported in the months leading up to the Hajj could reach up to two million animals. As Figure 6 shows, the situation has not returned to normal but a good number of animals are now being exported in the months leading up to the Hajj (despite the livestock ban) which is improving pastoralists access to income.



FAO and UNDP Somalia have welcomed an initiative launched under the auspices of the Somali Business Council (SBC) of the United Arab Emirates, Dubai, for the development of a common livestock organization to support the development and export of Somali livestock and livestock products. It is a positive step given the importance of the livestock sector to the Somali economy but also as the establishment of a Somali Livestock Board as a regulatory authority has the potential to improve the livelihoods of both rural and urban dwellers.

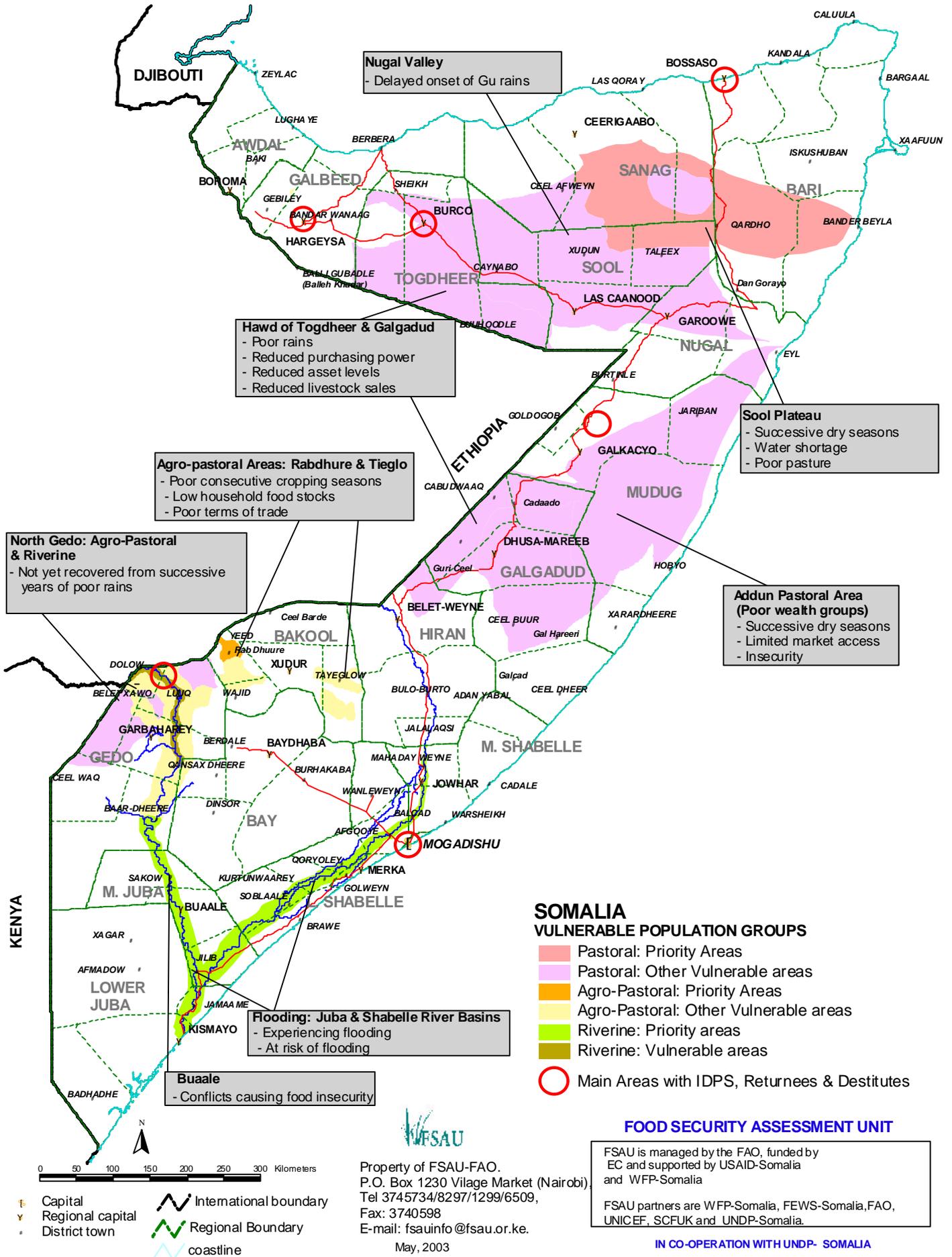
**LIVESTOCK EXPORT TABLE APRIL 2003**

Bosasso *	January	February	March	April
Camels	50	650	1,020	145
Cattle	5,820	3,236	9,013	5,185
Shoats	209,030	118,070	91,725	89,655
<b>Total</b>	<b>214,900</b>	<b>121,956</b>	<b>101,758</b>	<b>95,985</b>
Berbera **				
Camel	2,947	2,156	2,173	N/A
Cattle	10,174	5,003	3,273	N/A
Shoats	123,089	61,046	22,655	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>136,211</b>	<b>68,205</b>	<b>28,111</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Source \* Bosasso Port Authority

\*\* Berbera Port Authority

May Vulnerability Map following onset of Gu 2003 Rainy Season



**Nugal Valley**  
- Delayed onset of Gu rains

**Hawd of Togdheer & Galgadud**  
- Poor rains  
- Reduced purchasing power  
- Reduced asset levels  
- Reduced livestock sales

**Agro-pastoral Areas: Rabdhure & Tieglo**  
- Poor consecutive cropping seasons  
- Low household food stocks  
- Poor terms of trade

**North Gedo: Agro-Pastoral & Riverine**  
- Not yet recovered from successive years of poor rains

**Sool Plateau**  
- Successive dry seasons  
- Water shortage  
- Poor pasture

**Addun Pastoral Area (Poor wealth groups)**  
- Successive dry seasons  
- Limited market access  
- Insecurity

**Flooding: Juba & Shabelle River Basins**  
- Experiencing flooding  
- At risk of flooding

**Buuaale**  
- Conflicts causing food insecurity

**SOMALIA VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS**

- Pastoral: Priority Areas
- Pastoral: Other Vulnerable areas
- Agro-Pastoral: Priority Areas
- Agro-Pastoral: Other Vulnerable areas
- Riverine: Priority areas
- Riverine: Vulnerable areas
- Main Areas with IDPS, Returnees & Destitutes

**FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT UNIT**

FSAU is managed by the FAO, funded by EC and supported by USAID-Somalia and WFP-Somalia  
FSAU partners are WFP-Somalia, FEWS-Somalia, FAO, UNICEF, SCFUK and UNDP-Somalia.

IN CO-OPERATION WITH UNDP- SOMALIA

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REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS

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

**SOOL REGION**

**Nugal Valley FEZ :** Except for the western fringe of the valley (Ainablo district) a majority of the Nugal valley (approximately 85%) remains hot and dry due to a 3 week delay in the start of the *Gu* rains. Approximately 75% of the pastoral households living in the central and upper Nugal valley (north west of Las Anod town) migrated to the nearest rain-fed areas of Ainablo district which is 80km away. Given their poor body condition, shoats were trucked, along with nomadic huts, to these sites. Poor households, who could not afford the move, were left behind and their livestock are malnourished. These poorer households are not obtaining their minimum food requirements, and this shortage is expected to persist even if good rains commence soon. Income from milk sales has stopped. Income from livestock sales is only 35% of the baseline. Remittances from abroad and locally are the main source of income for the majority of rural people. Expenditure is reserved for staple food and sugar purchases. Water is available and accessible throughout the valley. One shoat local quality gets 55Kg of rice (compared to the baseline 39Kg of rice). Although terms of trade have improved this is because supply of marketable animals has reduced and food supply is good. Since few poor pastoralists have marketable animals they cannot benefit from the good Terms of Trade and hence incomes are too low for sufficient food purchase. In the **Hawd Plateau of Sool FEZ**, the rains were delayed, although it appears that rain is on the way. The majority of HH's were obtaining normal food intake although milk production has been reduced to 60% of the baseline. Income for food purchases has dropped below usual levels and income from labor has declined. Water trucking is continuing in most of *Hawd*. Prices have increased from 10,000 to 30,000 Ssh a drum. Buhodle town received some showers, helping to alleviate some of the water problems. The part of the Sool Plateau that falls in this region is covered in the Sanaag and Togdheer highlight..

**NORTH WEST AND AWDAL**

The *Gu* rainy season in 2003 started in the second dekad of April in both regions. Rains have been good and fairly uniform in distribution - they have been considered above normal for the period with which they fell. Most of the pastoralists from Shinnile in Ethiopia who arrived in Awdal in December/January 2003 have returned to Ethiopia. The availability and accessibility of water for both human and livestock has increased due to the *Gu* rains and replenished water catchments. Pasture and fodder started to generate in both regions. Farmers in both regions have planted sorghum and maize. In April, the Somaliland shilling decreased in value as a result of election activities as political parties bought more dollars for their election campaigns. In addition to that, the war in Iraq had a negative impact on the quantity and price of imported items as well as US\$/Somaliland shilling exchanges rate. The rehabilitation of Hargeisa, Berbera, Gebilay and Borama, Wajaale and Kalabaydh roads and also Hargeisa drainage system contributed to employment opportunities this month. Charcoal burning and sales have been observed as a coping mechanism which negatively effects the environment.

**SANAG AND TOGHDEER**

Approximately 80% of the prime grazing areas of Sanaag region, particularly the drought affected areas like the Sool plateau of eastern Sanaag, Gebi valley, Hadeed and Bancadde plains of Eil-Afwein district, are still dry and hot. The **Sool Plateau Food Economy Zone** is now facing an emergency situation due to the delay of the onset of *Gu* rain, combined with limited rainfall in previous seasons. There are few migration options available because close-by areas received only minimal rainfall. Livestock deaths have been reported due to lack of water and pasture. Both middle and poor pastoral wealth groups do not have enough food, comprising more than 78% of pastoralists in the area. Their own food stocks have been completely used up, and income to purchase food has dropped by 60%. The ban on charcoal processing is still in place which affects self-employment opportunities. Staple food and water purchases remain the only expenditure possible at the moment. *Berkads* are the main source of water and they have been empty for several months. Water trucking is the only option for both humans and livestock. The price per drum went up from 40,000 Ssh to 65,000 Ssh per drum. In the **Hawd of Togdheer**, *Gu* rains have been very poor and localized and insufficient to regenerate pastures. However, the Golis mountains of Togdheer and Sanaag received good rains which generated new fodder and vegetation. The livestock in these areas demonstrated significant improvements. Many herders from Gebi valley and Bancadde plains of Sanaag moved to the Golis highlands, while in the *Hawd* of Togdheer many pastoralists moved to Zone five of Ethiopia for better grazing. Those who stayed behind are still experiencing hardship. Pastoralists in parts of *Hawd* of Togdheer and Sool plateau are experiencing severe water shortages; water trucking is ongoing but expensive. Some animals have been moved which causes stress when their body condition is so poor. Major camel calving is not expected until next *Deyr*, therefore, income from milk sales is expected to be below normal.

**NORTH NUGAL & SOUTH BARI**

**Lyah FEZ** (parts of Gardo district and Dangoroyo district). This area received some rain in March and *berkads* were replenished. However, in-migration of livestock in March from Nugal Valley and Sool Plateau FEZ has caused a build-up of livestock numbers. Animal body condition noticeably improved. There has been no rainfall in April and livestock, especially camels, have started out migrating to the *Hawd* FEZ.

**Hawd of Nugal, Addun and Deeh FEZ's.** March rainfall improved pasture and livestock production and April has seen additional rains with most *berkads* filled. For the part of **Sool Plateau Food Economy Zone** that falls in this region (Gardo district) please see the Sanag and Togdheer highlight.

**SOUTH NUGAL AND NORTH MUDUG**

The **Hawd FEZ** remains normal, the **Addun FEZ** remains in a situation of alert and the situation is normal in the **Coastal Deeh FEZ**. In *Hawd* rains fell in the east, causing abnormal migration to the area and leading to overgrazing. Access to food has improved for the poor, due to increased access to shoat milk and meat. However this milk is not sufficient for sales so they are relying on labour, self-employment and gifts to meet their needs. In Addun food economy zone light rains in the west have encouraged migration to the area, increasing the risk of pasture depletion due to overgrazing. *Berkeds* were replenished by the light rainfall. The poor wealth groups who were affected by the poor *Gu* last year still have below normal access to food, though due to early kidding they are receiving some milk. These supplies are limited, however, since the shoats have not recovered from the previous effects of *Jilaal* and milk yields are still low. These households are relying on labor and self employment. The price of water fell fifty percent compared to last month but the price of cereal has increased. There has been an increase in fuel prices which has affected transportation costs.

**BARI**

Two districts (Iskushuban and B/Beyla districts) fall into the **Sool Plateau FEZ** in Bari Region—see the Sanaag and Togdheer highlight above for more information. In the **Dharoor FEZ**, the overall situation is normal with the exception of poor pastoralists in Uur Aleed and Meeladayn village who are suffering water shortages. Self-employment activities of lobster catching are over—due to the seasonal closure of fishing/lobster camps. However, Oxfam GB has started implementing a Water and Sanitation programme in several villages of Iskushuban district, increasing income opportunities related to the construction of *berkads* and latrines. In the **Coastal FEZ** the food security of the pastoral population is normal but food security for the urban food economy group is considered below normal because of inflation—high cereal prices and low wage rates and less employment opportunities as the high sea season progresses and Bossaso dwellers start to move to cooler areas.

**BAKOL**

Overall food security in the region has improved, following the onset of the *Gu* rains. Up until mid-April, water was a big problem; there were shortages in the urban areas and livestock were driven to the main permanent water-points. Outbreaks of water-borne diseases contributed to increasing malnutrition rates and pasture around these points became depleted. However, the *Gu* rains started on time with normal intensity and distribution. Crops were planted in the agro-pastoral areas and most are reported to have germinated. FAO and ICRC provided seed in Tieglo, Hudur, Wajid and Rabdure districts to households who were unable to carry through stocks from previous bad seasons. FAO has further assisted in the opening up of 200 hectares of agricultural land in Tieglo. Prices have remained normal in most markets, except Rabdure, where they increased suddenly up by 45%; this is attributed to low supplies following previous poor seasons. Terms of trade are favourable for pastoralists. Milk prices, however, fell towards the end of the month due to increased production.

**GEDO**

The long awaited *Gu* rains arrived in mid-April. Light to extremely heavy rainfall fell in most parts of the eastern and southern parts of the region. Water sources are replenished and full, enabling pastoralists to enjoy the availability of both pasture and water. The first signs of recovery from the recent successive years of drought are appearing. Favorable terms of trade and good livestock prices have been observed in both the Dawa and Southern Inland Pastoral Food Economy Zones and this improved the purchasing power of pastoralists. The overall food availability in the region is good with the help of the relief program in the north. The poor wealth groups in the region continue to find it difficult to access food and this needs further investigation. There has been an increase in the price of imported commodity prices as a result of blocked roads due to heavy rainfall, but enough stocks have been seen in the main markets. The river level of both the Juba and Dawa is of great concern— see River Water levels on page 2.

**MIDDLE SHABELLE**

The *Gu* rains started on time throughout the region, although the distribution was not uniform. For instance, Mahaday district received good to heavy rains, which replenished water catchments, while pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Jowhar and Bal'ad districts received relatively low rainfall. The amount received was still sufficient for seed germination. Agricultural activities are at their peak, but land preparations were delayed by tractor shortages. Cereal supply in markets have increased as families are obliged to sell more of their stock in order to meet tractor expenses for land preparation. Food availability and accessibility is good. Rains also improved water, pasture and browsing conditions in the rangelands, and as a result, livestock conditions have improved. Terms of trade for labour are 8.8kg of cereals /day and for milk, one liter garners 1.6kg of grain.

**BAY**

The *Gu* rainy season began in the second dekad of April and so far, rainfall has been higher than normal, with the rain gauge in Baidoa recording 212 mm compared with the 150 mm average. Seeds are plentiful following the last good *Deyr* season and hence cropping is expected to be good. Water resources have been replenished and pasture is recovering; as a result, livestock body condition is good and production normal. Animals are being moved away from the cropping areas to the rangelands. Sorghum prices increased initially during the month (attributed to high demand from Mogadishu) and then decreased again later on (attributed to blocked trade routes, good crop prospects, and large stocks from the previous good *Deyr*). Terms of trade are extremely favourable for livestock owners, with one goat fetching 8-10 bags of sorghum, while one litre of fresh milk fetches 5-6 kg of sorghum. For the poor, agricultural labour (planting and weeding) represents the most important source of income (and hence food through purchase) and a day's labour fetches 8-10 kg of sorghum.

**JUBA VALLEY**

The *Gu* rainfall started in mid-April onwards and was light (in the remote areas) to moderate (along the riverine areas). Rainfall was intense along the coastal area from Jilib east towards Kismayo west. These rains replenished most of the water catchments and ponds across the pastoral areas, and pasture and grazing have improved. The overall food security situation for the Food Economy Zones in the region are normal with the exception of IDPs in both Hagar and Kismayo, where lower food accessibility has been observed due to reduced income opportunities. All imported commodity prices increased by almost 25% compared to last month (except for Kismayo area) due to roads being blocked by heavy rains. Buuale (FEZ) has experienced and continues to experience food scarcity since insecurity commenced last year. The Juba river water levels rose during the month and reached full capacity in mainly Jilib and Jammame areas and reports confirm localized floods along the riverine farms; to date (6 May) the floods are not alarming.

**LOWER SHABELLE**

The *Gu* rains started during the second half of the month. With the exception of localized areas, heavy rains fell throughout the region. Most of the water catchments were replenished and overall livestock condition is normal with improved water access, pasture and browsing conditions. Camel and shoats have already migrated to their traditional inland grazing areas, while most of the cattle still remain around the riverine and agro-pastoral areas. Milk prices increased in urban centers as pastoralists moved away. Both rain-fed and riverine farmers planted maize, intercropped with cowpeas. However, the price of maize seed is high, making it difficult for poorer household to purchase (2500ssh/Kg). Poor wealth groups of the riverine FEZ have depleted their cereal stock and are depending on market purchases. Labor demand is high due to the ongoing farming activities, provides good income opportunities for poor families. The terms of trade for daily labor are 7 – 9.5kg of maize per day while milk/maize is 1 liter for 3.5kg maize.

**COWPEA BELT**

The cowpea belt districts are Adanyabal, Adale, Elder, Galhareri, Hara-dhere and Hobyo. There were scattered and light rains in Hara-dhere, Galhareri, Elder and Adanyabal. The weather is generally hot and dry. Water availability is declining and prices are rising. The livestock body condition has deteriorated, reducing the numbers sold and consequently increasing prices. Dry land planting for cowpea and sorghum is occurring. Peanuts and sesame are being planted in parts of Adale and Adanyabal. Household cereal stocks (maize and sorghum) have declined. The current coping strategies are sales of livestock and livestock products, collection of wild foods, remittances and support from relatives. The cost of cereals has increased due to inflation and a fuel shortage which has resulted in high transportation costs.

**GALGADUUD**

Rainfall across the region occurred late March to late April. More is still needed but it has brought relief in many areas as *balleys* and *berkhads* fill up, attracting livestock and freeing income. Abudwak and Adado districts (*Ciid* or *Haud* pastoral FEZ) - of concern last month – received good rains in late April. High milk production in agropastoral and *Ciid* pastoral areas is lowering prices. Livestock prices are rising despite poor body condition because few are marketable. Browse is good, but grazing remains poor. Poor households, particularly in the pastoral areas of Abudwak and Adado, continue to have weak purchasing power. The urban poor are taking on construction work for the Adado airstrip (Harar-dhere lobster and fish export). Normal terms of trade are reported (1 shoaat : 100kg cereal + cash).

**HIRAN**

Normal *Gu* rains started late April in southern areas with below normal rains in Belet-Wein district. Heavy rains in Ethiopia caused the river level to rise daily and there is risk of flooding both in Belet Wein town and down river. Germination is good in southern areas and below normal in Belet-Wein; camels and shoats are in good condition with good pasture whereas cattle in settled areas continue to suffer from overgrazing (and minimal *deyr* rains). Households still have *deyr* sorghum stocks and supply from Bay and Bakool is irregular (due to road blocks and rain); maize and cowpea prices (from Shabelle) are also higher than normal. Fuel prices remain one-third higher compared to this time last year, and this cost continues to threaten supplementary pump irrigation. An outbreak of diarrhea has caused high mortality since mid-April and the numbers of people seeking help through the supplementary feeding program has risen to 800. See last month's highlight for more comment.