

EDITORIAL

This month, changes in the climatic outlook have brought about expectations of changes in the food security outlook too. However, FSAU believes that although the rainfall in the southern part of the country has improved pasture in a few areas, it has so far been too patchy and of too short a duration to ensure adequate recovery of most pastoral and farming communities. Gedo region, where there is currently the greatest food insecurity, has benefited the least from the onset of the *Deyr* rains. Even if rainfall were plentiful, it would take a full month for the region's food security to improve and even longer to see any improvement in nutritional status.

A key feature this month has been FSAU's revision of the food gap until the end of June next year, which now stands at just over 55,000 MT, (minus the food already distributed by CARE and WFP.) Approximately 780,000 people are affected throughout the country for a variety of reasons and to differing degrees. The food gap has increased due to the following two factors : (1) The updated scenarios for Gedo resulting in substantially higher deficits for both the 'poor' and 'middle' wealth groups. (2) Increased deficits and vulnerable groups were identified in the Northern regions of Bari and Awdal. (Further breakdown of the food gap by region and district are available from FSAU on request.)

Following the FSAU assessment in October in Gedo, the scenario was updated to reflect the deteriorating situation there. This Monthly Report contains explanations underlying those changes, as well as reviews on food security in the vulnerable northern areas of Bari and Awdal. There is a description of the *Deyr* rainfall distribution so far, an article on the risk of flooding in southern Somalia, the continued slide in the Somali shilling and highlights from the FSAU's 'Nutrition Update'. The regional summaries are also longer this month, reflecting the need to provide up to-date and detailed information during this critical rainfall period.

Finally, The FSAU team will be undertaking field work for the *Deyr* crop establishment starting from mid-November.

HIGHLIGHTS

DEYR RAINY SEASON : The secondary rainy season usually starts in the first half of October. *Deyr* rains have been slightly delayed this year. By the end of October, improvement in pasture and water availability has only been observed in various areas. *Deyr* rains began during the second decade of October in Bay and Bakool. Heavy rainfall was also recorded in the second half of the month in limited areas of Hiran and M. Shabelle. October was relatively dry in L. Shabelle. There had been no rainfall in the Juba valley (including Gedo) until the very end of October. *Deyr* rains started in October in most parts of northern Somalia. The rains have been particularly good in the areas bordering Ethiopia (*Hawd* of Togdheer, Sool and Nugal). However, some areas remained dry (Bari, coastal belt of Awdal).

CROP ESTABLISHMENT IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA: October Rainfall allowed germination of newly planted seeds in parts of Bay and Bakool (sorghum). Rain-fed farming activities have been minimal in Gedo (lack of rains for agriculture, search of pasture as a priority). In M. and L. Shabelle, irrigated maize was growing normally (gravity irrigation) while no germination of rain-fed crop was observed. Rainfall was not sufficient for rain-fed agriculture in L. and M. Juba.

FLOODING : Localized flooding occurred in Jilib along the Juba river. Above normal rainfall has been observed in the Ethiopian catchments of the Shabelle river.

SOMALIA/KENYA BORDER REOPENS : In reality it was always difficult for the Kenyan authorities to enforce a complete closure of the border. However, the official reopening of the border will assist in relieving one of the many 'shocks' that people on the Somali side, particularly in Gedo region are experiencing. A large proportion of Somali pastoralists and agro-pastoralists depend on the Kenyan livestock market for their income and a lot of food aid makes its way over the border from Kenya, as does other non-food household commodities.

CLOSURE OF SOMALI MONEY TRANSFER COMPANY : Economic experts believe that the closure of the Money Transfer Company and leading telecommunication network in Somalia — Al-Barakat (Hawalad) which established itself as one of the cornerstones of the Somali economy during its decade in business, will have worrying humanitarian consequences particularly as the country is already in the grip of severe food shortages. The impact on delivery of remittances into Somalia will be great. It is estimated that in an average year, US \$200 million to \$500 million is transferred into Somalia through the Hawalad system.

Highlights from FSAU 'Nutrition Update'

Gedo

The overall welfare and nutritional status of the population in this region continues to be a major concern. On 9 October, a special meeting on Gedo was organised by the Nutrition Working Group of the SACB and a number of action points were agreed. An update on their progress is as follows: (i) statement issued by SACB on the seriousness of the situation in Gedo and other regions, (ii) CARE and WFP have collaborated to ensure a more varied food basket for distribution in districts where CARE already operates and discussion continues on the issue of areas not currently receiving food aid, (iii) Kenya-Somalia border issue has meanwhile been resolved, (iv) Gedo Health Consortium, Somali Red Crescent Society, UNICEF and

donors are discussing means of implementing supplementary feeding programmes and (v) all available information on nutrition and population movement is being shared among concerned parties.

Bay and Bakool

The current supplementary feeding programme supported by UNICEF, WFP and IMC has been extended and beneficiary numbers continue to rise. The programme will be closely monitored in an effort to ensure that the benefits outweigh any adverse consequences of such an approach.

For further details on these and other issues related to nutrition in Somalia, see the November issue of 'Nutrition Update', or contact noreen.prendiville@fsau.or.ke

LIVESTOCK BAN AND RAMADAN

The grave implications of the ban on the Somalia economy and food security are likely to be accentuated in the period leading up to Ramadan. The prices of certain food items particularly wheat, flour, rice, sugar and dates are likely to increase because of increased demand during this fasting period. Poor pastoral and urban groups suffering from the worst effects of the livestock ban will be less able to purchase these goods to fulfill Ramadan. However, food availability and accessibility generally remains good despite the ban, with slow switches from imported rice and sugar to cheaper local products reported. With the relatively late Deyr rains, milk production for consumption will reduce the need for sugar and cereals for many groups, particularly pastoralists with good livestock numbers. More of a concern is that while the Haji is approaching, the ban from Saudi Arabia is still in place. Livestock trade provides valuable foreign exchange for Somalia and chances for importing major staples. Haji represents the most important

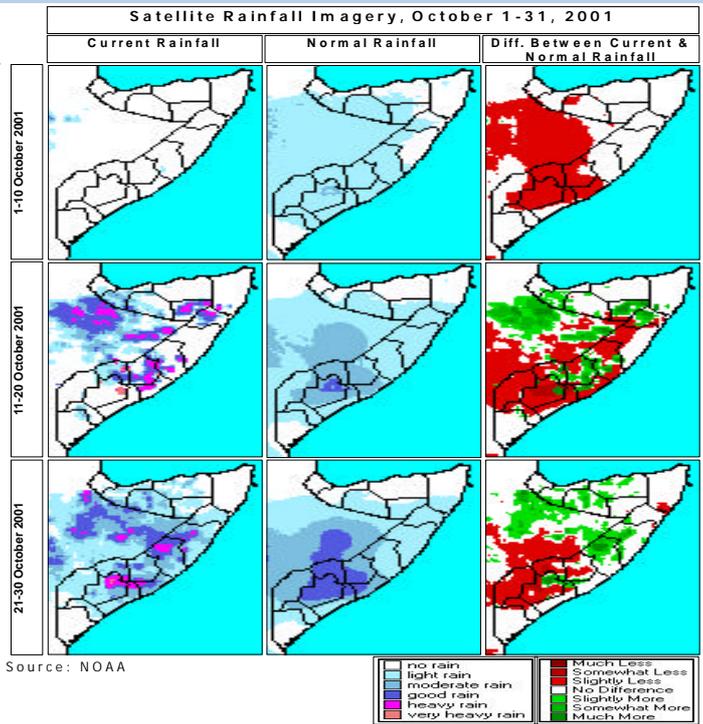
period for livestock marketing, when around one third/one half of the total livestock trade takes place. Thousands of animals would normally been exported to the Gulf States, with more than 90% of this trade directed to Saudi Arabia, where Haji pilgrims gather. In 2002 Haji will come by the end of February and it is estimated that if the Saudi Arabia ban is not lifted before the end December 2001, this key economic opportunity will be missed. Apart from the overall economic impact, pastoralist purchasing power will be seriously impacted by this event. Nevertheless Somali livestock trading shows indeed some signs of recovery. In the case of Bossaso seaport, although yearly figures attest a consistent decrease in overall export, livestock export in September 2001 is the highest in recent times. Export to other Gulf countries that lifted the ban (UAE and Oman) and alternative markets (such as Egypt) are therefore cushioning this situation for the time being, although terms of trade are not always favourable.

RAINFALL IN SOMALIA DURING OCTOBER 2001

Deyr is the secondary rainy season in Somalia. Normally, *Deyr* rains start at the beginning of October and end in mid-December. *Deyr* rains are typically localized and less reliable than the *Gu* rains. Good *Deyr* rains usually alleviate the severity of the following dry season (mid-January-March). As seen in the figures on the right, rainfall arrived late in this *Deyr* season. In fact, Somalia remained virtually dry during the 1st dekad of October. In the 2nd and 3rd dekads of October, variable rainfall fell in different parts of Somalia. Particularly heavy rainfall was recorded in limited areas of **Bay, Bakol, Hiran, Middle Shabelle, Galgadud, Nugal and Sool regions.**

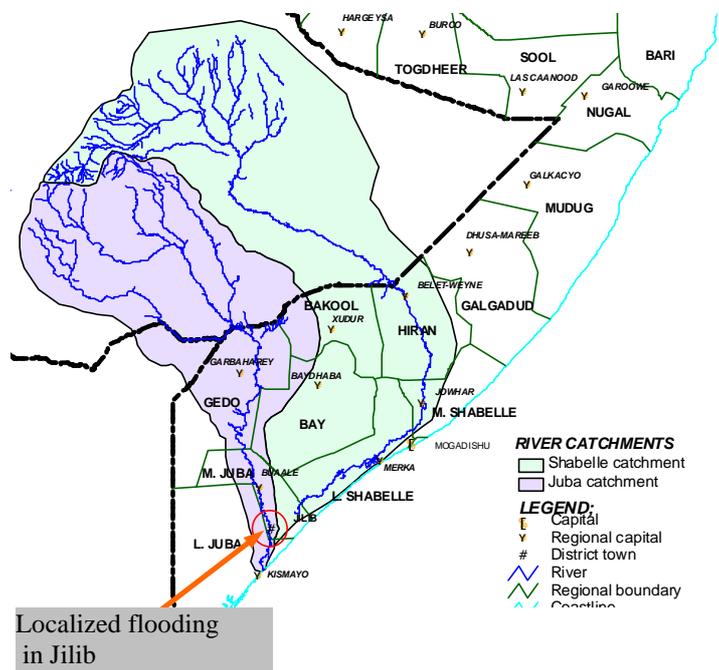
The difference between current and normal rainfall (figures on the right) indicates that rainfall was **below normal** in most agricultural areas of southern Somalia (red color) throughout October. A cross section of reports from the field confirm these rainfall patterns and warn that rainfed crops may fail again because of poor rainfall in Gedo and in most of Bay region.

Reports from the field also indicate a massive concentration of livestock in areas where rainfall occurred in the last two dekads. Livestock concentration in small areas depletes pasture before it reaches flowering and seed formation stages. Hence, accelerates the disappearance (extinction) of the best grasses and leguminous species in those areas. High livestock concentration also accelerates the diffusion of contagious diseases, which decimate livestock and reduce livestock products.



RISK OF FLOODING IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA

Early November, localized flooding occurred along the **Juba river**. Several villages were flooded in Jilib district (Middle Juba). UNICEF is responding with minimal assistance to the most needy families. River levels are not exceeding normal ranges, but they are still rising. Flooding in M. Juba was mainly man-made (deliberate opening of river embankments for agricultural purposes). The lack of maintenance of the river embankments was also a key factor. The *Deyr* rainy season really started in the first week of November with the heavy rains received in Afmadow, Hagar and other areas. However, local rains usually have a minor impact on the river level. Rainfall has not been above average during the month of October in the Ethiopian catchments of Juba river. To date, no serious flooding has been observed in the **Shabelle valley**. Up to the end of October, rising river levels have been beneficial to gravity irrigation (*Deyr* maize production). The *Deyr* rainy season started in the last dekad of October in M. Shabelle. In L. Shabelle, virtually no rain was received before the widespread heavy rains of the first week of November. Above normal rainfall has been observed in October in the Shabelle river catchments areas (Ethiopia). The situation needs to be carefully monitored. An emergency 'SACB Flood Management Group' meeting was held on the 6th of November. UNICEF and ICRC are well prepared to face small-scale floods. The situation could become worse and responding to larger flood emergency would need more coordination and support.



DETERIORATING SITUATION IN GEDO REGION– INCREASES THE SOMALIA FOOD GAP

Due to reports of the rapidly deteriorating situation in Gedo during September, an FSAU team visited the area in the first week of October 2001. The team's information was combined with updated monitoring information from field staff. As a result, the household food economy scenarios that were constructed for the rural food economy groups in Gedo region were analysed and re-constructed to reflect the new situation. The revised food security situation in Gedo has increased the food gap for Gedo region to 11,340 MT, which when combined with the urban poor and IDP's registered by CARE, means that *food needs for the region* are in excess of 20,000 MT. A report on the FSAU Gedo field trip is included in the FSAU Focus 'Pastoralists Under Pressure' (October 2001).

BACKGROUND

The scenario presented in the September 'Focus' was constructed in August and was based on the available *Gu* harvest assessment data. The majority of households in Gedo have a pastoral-based economy, except for a minority of groups with irrigated farms close to the Juba River. Investigations in August confirmed that these farmers were able to cope, despite insecurity and rising prices for inputs (especially fuel). Subsequently, they have also benefited from the present lack of pasture by selling fodder from their fields to wealthier pastoralists. Therefore the three remaining groups, the agro-pastoralists, the pastoralists and the urban poor/IDP'S, are currently of greatest concern in Gedo.

AGRO-PASTORALISTS

Unlike the farmers with irrigated land, agro-pastoralists live further from the river and their crops are rain-dependent. Using an assumption that the *Deyr* harvest will be 35% of post-war average, the problem specification for crop production was set at less than 10% of baseline. So far, the *Deyr* rains have not progressed far enough to warrant any change in this figure. On the understanding that poor pasture could be substituted with the bit of fodder available on fields, or that households would be able to send their livestock to nearby districts where pasture was a little better, milk production was estimated at 60% of baseline. This figure turned out to be an over-estimate, and has been revised downwards to 10% because of the lack of fodder, the livestock deaths (reports say that 60% of herds actually remaining in region have died) and the inability of shoats to travel long distances (high number of shoats in herd in Gedo region).

Very poor animal condition and deaths have also reduced the saleability of livestock, hence trading is down from an already poor rate of 40% (compared with baseline) to 25%. Although the prices for an animal of a given condition have been good, from the perspective of the household, the decline in condition of their animals has dropped the value of their herd and so price estimates for animals have dropped to half of baseline value.

Key assumptions made at the workshop in Baidoa in August for north Gedo agro-pastoralists (baseline or reference year – 1998), compared with the changes now:

Variable	Problem Specification	
	August	October
Crop production	<10%	<10%
Milk/dairy production	60%	10%
Milk/dairy price	100%	100%
Livestock marketing	100%	25%
Livestock price	80%	50%
Labour availability	40%	25%
Labour price	80%	80%
Self-employment	100%	100%
Value of goods from s-emp.	80%	80%
Gifts	100%	100%
Staple price	130%	100%

Other factors, such as labour and self-employment, play a role in terms of access to food but it was found that these do not greatly influence the final result. Overall, the deficit has risen from around 30% to around 40%.

PASTORALISTS

Gedo region was the only area in southern Somalia where it was found that pastoral groups would be facing a deficit as well. It was also the only area with a 'middle' wealth group experiencing difficulties. As pastoralists do not produce crops, the two most important variables for them are dairy production and livestock sales.

The severity of the drought meant that the FSAU projections for milk production are reduced to 10%, half that assumed in August. The drought has become so severe that 50-60% of animals *remaining* in Gedo have died; these are mostly cattle and shoats. There is thus no milk available from shoats or cattle that *remained in the region*. There is, however, some milk available from animals that migrated out of the region; these comprise camels and cattle and a portion of their milk is expected to make its way back (usually as ghee) to the family members who remained behind.

An assumption was also made in August that due to the expected poor condition of the animals and the longer distances that they would need to travel, markets access would be around 50% of baseline; while the price change in dollar terms was expected to be 75% of baseline. For the poor wealth group who have a higher proportion of shoats in their herds, large numbers of animal deaths and poor body condition has meant that the number of saleable animals is only 25% of baseline. The middle wealth group benefit from a greater number of camels; these are sold by the male family members who migrated with them to Ethiopia or Middle/Lower Juba and some of the proceeds are remitted back to the rest of the family; their 'problem' for sales is still 50%.

Finally, FSAU anticipated that the price of cereals would almost triple, reaching similar levels (in dollar terms) as in 1999 (a year that was similar in terms of drought and crop production). However, this has not happened and cereal prices do not look as likely to exceed more than twice their baseline values.

Consequently, the 'poor' are estimated at having to face a deficit of over 50%, which is up from 30% in August. More alarmingly,

Key assumptions made at the workshop in Baidoa in August for north Gedo pastoralists (baseline or reference year – 2000), compared with the changes now:

Variable	Problem Specification	
	August	October
Milk/dairy production	20%	10%
Milk/dairy price	100%	100%
Livestock marketing	50%	25%*
Livestock price	75%	50%
Collection of gums and resins	40%	40%
Gums/resins price	70%	70%
Self-employment	100%	100%
Value of goods from s-emp.	80%	80%
Gifts	100%	100%
Meat	70%	70%
Staple price	280%	200%

*25% for the poor wealth group. 50% for the middle wealth group.

the larger 'middle' wealth group are estimated at facing a deficit of just under 50%, up from only 5-10% in August. The poor and middle wealth groups together account for more than three-quarters of all households.

URBAN POOR AND IDP'S

Currently, FSAU does not have baseline information on the Urban Poor/IDP groups. These may be former pastoralists who lost their animals or are victims of conflict who have fled to urban centres. They may also be families from socially marginalised groups or simply very poor rural households who have moved to the towns in search of labour opportunities and/or services.

Essentially this group have a structural deficit; they depend primarily on casual labour, relief handouts and self-employment for income or for food. Even in a good year they cannot make ends meet properly. Their present deficit is likely to be far greater than 50%, hence they will require a full food ration for each household member until next year's *Gu* harvest.

SUMMARY OF FSAU FIELD REPORT FROM AWDAL REGION - OCTOBER 2001

During the second week of October 2001, an FSAU assessment team visited the coastal communities of Awdal region, in order to assess the impact on livestock and livelihoods, following a prolonged drought, livestock trade ban and closure of the border between Djibouti and Somaliland.

The coastal belt is usually quite dry. In a normal year the Awdal belt would receive rain for around three months, i.e the Hays rains from October to December. However the Hays rain failed in 2000 and little rains have so far been received this year – drought conditions are now prevailing. If 2001 Hays rains fail – the intensity of the problems in this area will increase dramatically.

Compared to the rest of Somalia, pastoralists in this region have the least opportunity to diversify their income. They are purely nomadic and get approximately 70% of their income from livestock sales and associated products. Herd sizes have decreased due to high livestock death rates, especially shoats. Animals have also been slaughtered for Household consumption. Livestock sales have been affected by lack of markets due to the Livestock Ban.

It is reported that around 20% of pastoralists in the area migrated out to the Golis range for better grazing. However it should be noted, that camel herd mobility in this region is usually limited to the coastal and sub coastal areas due to problems with camel adaptability. High death rates have been observed on sheep stocks that were moved to the highlands three months ago. These sheep had poor resistance to tick borne diseases and a parasitic worm (helmintheasis). These diseases are uncommon in the coastal belt because of the high temperatures.

Camels give birth during the Deyr season. Reports from the field say that 70-80% of breeding camels (females above 5 years of age) are now in calf in the coastal belt and are expected to give birth in the coming two months. This will help increase milk availability and milk consumption.

The coastal pastoral household in Awdal depends on trade with Djibouti just across the border for trade of livestock and associated products. Livelihoods were severely affected, when the border was shut earlier in the year. Pastoralists had no other major market for livestock, milk and ghee and were unable to purchase imported food and non-food items. Other markets are located too far away and are served by poor tracks making transporting costs prohibitive. Fortunately, after long negotiations, the problem of the border was resolved and it was re-opened on 21 October 2001.

The livestock import ban imposed by Gulf countries has also forced the Awdal pastoral community to compete with other livestock communities - particularly the animal market in Djibouti. Animals from Togdheer, Hargeisa and Zone 5 of Ethiopia are now also brought to Djibouti. Although shoats from the coastal area produce better tasting meat than those in the North West, they have lower body weight, giving lower unit prices.

Social traditional support in the form of remittances from urban centres has lowered to almost zero due to widespread income poverty. The most common support received from rich households to poor households is camel milk, which could not be sold at Djibouti market. The quality and frequency of meals has deteriorated.

SUMMARY OF FSAU FIELD REPORT FROM BARI REGION - OCTOBER 2001

Bari region is the second largest in Somalia. The communities inhabiting the region derive their livelihoods from three main sources : livestock and their associated products, fishing and frankincense. The coastal communities are relatively food secure as they derive food supplies from their lobster fishing. The fishing season began in October and lasts for around eight months. At this time, IDP's increase in the coastal areas in the hope they can find casual employment often sending money back to their families. Some may even move on to find work in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

However, it is the pastoralists currently living in the region who are threatened by food scarcity as the livestock economy continues to remain depressed. Livestock prices are exceptionally low and commodity prices very high, not favouring pastoralist's terms of trade (imported cereals such as rice and wheat flour are specific examples; farm gate prices are even higher due to distances and transportation from major ports). According to local socio-cultures, herders in Bari eat exclusively imported food commodities and rarely switch to cheaper cereals – sorghum and maize. Few pastoralists have diversified into the frankincense business, although currently frankincense prices are good following the establishment of links with Arab countries. In particular, two food economy zones in Bari region containing

highland camel, goat and sheep herders are now badly affected. FSAU estimates that 32,000 people are at risk and they are expected to face a food gap of 2,360 MT (from Gu 2001 to Gu 2002). This, despite a partial improvement in livestock exports (Bossaso exported 234,000 animals this year, still about half of 'normal'). Some rains have also started to fall, these may go some way to alleviating what is rapidly become a desperate situation.

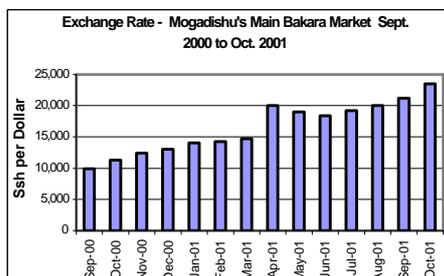
An improvement in the rangelands and roads to major markets would assist pastoralists in overcoming future 'shocks' to their livelihoods. Also, the development of water points for the wet season grazing areas would be useful even if they were not operational during the dry season. The mean yearly rainfall of Bari region is less than 100mm so the area depends on flood waters that come in from the neighboring regions of Sanaag and Sool. Due to the mountainous nature of Bari region, most of the rain water goes directly into the Indian ocean without flooding the prime grazing areas of the livestock. The FSAU assessment recommended consideration for projects that halt or divert these run-off waters onto the rangeland to support the vegetation and increase water availability.

Even if the Deyr rains arrive, low livestock prices are likely to continue, due to the livestock import ban to Arab countries.

CONTINUOUS DEVALUATION OF THE SOMALI CURRENCY

The **Somaliland shilling** was already loosing value before the ban (3,500-4,000 Ssh/dollar in September 2000). After the ban, the depreciation became sharper. Surprisingly, the Somaliland shilling has recently gained value (from Ssh 7,400 per dollar in September to Ssh 6,900 per dollar in October).

The **Somali shilling** has fallen against the dollar since the imposition of the livestock ban. The exchange rate, which stabilized at about Ssh 10,000 per dollar before the ban (from June '99 to September 2000), reached 20,000 Ssh per dollar in August (see chart). Besides the ban, high monetary supplies and political turmoil were also key factors. In Mogadishu Bakara market, the exchange rate increased from Ssh 21,225/ dollar in September to Ssh 23,500/dollar in October (+11%). Further devaluation can be expected (purchase of imported commodities likely to increase now that the high tide season is over, higher demand in dollars).



HEALTH

Meningitis

An outbreak of meningitis has been reported in Hargeisa town. During the three week period from 18 October to 6 November, a total of eighteen suspected cases have been seen with eight cases confirmed as Type A Meningococcal Meningitis. One death has been reported. Guidelines on the detection and management of the disease are available through the SACB. Further information on the outbreak is available from WHO which has already set a mechanism in place to monitor the situation.

Malaria

As is usual at this time, the incidence of cases of suspected malaria is increasing.

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

SOOL & BUHOODLE

The *Deyr* rains have improved water and pasture availability in most parts of Sool Region and Buhoodle. The *Hawd* area received the bulk of the rain filling the berkedes and other water catchments. There has been scanty and sporadic rain on Sool plateau, but most of the berkedes are now partially full however pasture availability remains poor. Animal condition and production is improving but is still below normal because of the stress they endured during the previous months. The general food security conditions continue to deteriorate especially for urban poor and pastoralists because of the continuing devaluation of the Somalia shilling, the loss of income and assets from the livestock ban, rising commodity prices, casual labour wage remaining constant and limited employment opportunities. Poor pastoralists continue to send family members to better off relatives, to urban areas in search of employment or involve themselves in income generating activities which will have a long term detrimental impact on the environment.

N-NUGAL & S- BARI

The rains have so far been good in the *Hawd* area, the Nugal valley and Iyah. The coastal area of Eil received rain at the end of the month. In the northeastern and eastern side of Gardo, the rainfall so far has been very poor. The berkedes in these areas are almost dry. Pastoralists have had to resort to employing trucks to move livestock from Iskushuban and Gardo to further south. The value of the Somali shilling continues to fall (by 12%) causing all commodity prices to rise except for maize which remained constant. The price of camel milk has fallen due to the large amount of camel milk available on the market. Export quality goats are increasingly being sold in the local market because of the high prices they can reach. However, the daily wage for casual labour has remained constant during October therefore reducing the purchasing power for casual labourers.

LOWER SHABELLE

Food security in Lower Shabelle largely quite stable, due to adequate household food stocks and good opportunities for coping. The worst off are the poor in the rainfed maize food economy group. Although there has been thick cloud cover, high temperatures and humidity, the *Deyr* rains have not yet started. Away from the river, water has been in short supply and grazing is now depleted. Browsing still remains available, however. This has meant that livestock are concentrated in the riverine area where fodder is available and animals are reported to be in good condition, with normal milk production. Livestock/food terms of trade are also favourable for the herders. Maize in the irrigated area is in different stages of development, from planting to tassling, harvesting of sesame and cowpea has begun. High fuel prices brought about by the weakened shilling have made tractor hire very expensive in local terms and labour opportunities are available, although pay rates are low (S\$hs. 10,000-15000/-). Land preparation and dry sowing are taking place in the rainfed areas. Both maize and sorghum prices are up 14-15% in Somali shillings prices, while imported commodities have risen in tandem with the exchange rate.

SANAG & TOGHDEER

The *Deyr* rains started in the drought affected areas of eastern *Hawd* area of Togdheer improving pasture and water availability as well as livestock production rates (there were many drought-induced abortions especially among the camels during the dry season). The heavy rains in the eastern part of Burao damaged an important bridge which links the eastern and western parts of Somaliland. As normal many (approx. 1,800) weakened shoats throughout Togdheer died during these rains. The *Deyr* rains in Sanag region have been poor except for a few areas in Afweyn, Erigavo and Dhahar district. The livestock migrated to areas with improved pasture and water availability. A few of the agro-pastoralists were unable to plant due to lack of seeds and tools. It is now possible to export livestock from Berbera to Egypt. This was the initiative of an Egyptian trader (with co-operation from Somaliland authorities) who started to buy camels from Burao / Hargeysa market. The price of export and local camels increased by 10-15% after this initiative.

S-NUGAL & N-MUDUG

Rains started in these regions towards the end of the month filling the berkedes and relieving stress at water points. Pasture and grazing is now normal except in the extreme eastern coast and parts of Glakaio and Gologob district. The shoats in these areas are still too weak to reproduce but it is hoped if the rain continues the reproduction rates will rise. However camel milk yields have increased but access to markets limits the possibilities to sell the milk. The pastoralists from these areas continue to send family members to the urban areas in search of employment opportunities. There has been early migration from the central grazing areas to the *hawd* and to the Ethiopia border. The livestock population in the *Hawd* of south Nugal and parts of central grazing areas are in good condition and production rates are normal. The value of the Somali shilling continues to fall causing cereal prices to rise making many essential commodities inaccessible to the urban poor. The remittance flow has been reduced to about 60-70% compared to previous months and has caused reduced market activity.

BARI REGION

The rains have been erratic and some parts have still not received any rain. The rains have improved the water and pasture conditions in Iyah, Sool and the coastal plains of B/Beyla district. The coastal communities and poor pastoralists are now catching lobsters which continues for the next 8 months. However, due to the increased lobsters being sold, prices are falling and the increased fishing activity may have a long term impact. Livestock condition and production is improving but calving and kidding rates will be lower than the last *Deyr* season, however lambing rates seem to be normal. Livestock prices have risen slightly in Bossaso but still remain lower than normal. Surprisingly pastoralists continue to eat the preferred but expensive imported rice rather than the cheaper locally produced cereal. The livestock prices for exports fell due to over supply after the export ban was lifted by UAE. For the dealers to maintain reasonable profit margins they mutually agreed to keep livestock supplies and buying prices low having an impact on employment opportunities.

NW & AWDAL

The coastal belt of Awdal continues to be severely affected by drought conditions and the *Hays* rain is not expected until December. The *Deyr* rains started in the mountainous parts of northwest region east of Hargeysa, the *Hawd* ecozone and the Golis range. Hundreds of weakened goats in the mountainous parts of Berbera district died during these rains. The crop failure among the agro-pastoralists is expected to be up to 50%, but some of the failed crops will be used as fodder. Agro-pastoralists who do not own milking animals and suffered crop failure are expected to face hardship in the coming months. Before the rains started many poor pastoralists moved to the urban areas in search of work, but the demand for casual labour in the urban areas was the lowest in the past 10 years. It is reported that IDPs in Hargeysa have experienced a 50-60% drop in the social support they receive.

MIDDLE SHABELLE

Deyr rains started late, in the 3rd *dekad* of the month, and were localised and scattered. Pasture has not recovered and is below normal for this time of the year, affecting cattle, which tend to be concentrated near the river for water and for grazing. Pasture is expected to improve, however. All animals have below normal body condition and milk production. Land preparation, planting and early weeding are progressing. When the river level dropped, gravity-fed irrigation was difficult and pumping is expensive due to fuel prices. Although food is available in the market, supplies of maize, sorghum and cowpeas are below normal, leading to higher prices; there were increases of 28%, 43% and 29% for the above commodities respectively. Imported items like sugar and fuel have also risen in price due to more expensive dollars. Nutrition and health status of the population have been reported as normal.

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

GEDO

Until the very end of the month, there had been no rainfall in Gedo. At the time of writing, Dolow and Baardheere received the best rainfall, which is considered sufficient to allow planting but, as in Bay and Bakool, not enough to ensure a harvest. Luuq district received some scattered rains outside of the town that improved browsing but grazing is still sparse and farming not possible. In Garbaharey and Burdhubo, scattered rains on the hills and outcrops helped with providing some water for livestock and human consumption but not enough to improve pasture and definitely too little for farming. Ceel Waaq and Belet Xawo had received no rainfall until the first days of November. Pastoralists are trying to cope with extreme food shortages by selling skins from their animals (50-60% of which have died), obtaining food aid from CARE's distributions (where these are taking place), moving their animals to other regions (smaller animals from Luuq have just moved to Bakool and others have moved to South Gedo or Middle Juba) and selling animals. Prices for most animals are actually quite good but given the poor pasture, only the rich pastoralists who can afford to purchase fodder are able to sell animals that are in good enough condition to fetch a decent price. Farming activities are minimal; agro-pastoral groups have abandoned their fields and gone in search of pasture or labour/income opportunities, while the high cost of inputs has acted as a disincentive to any kind of expansion by the riverine groups. Staple prices are still below expected levels but when compared with income sources such as labour they are high. Even with abundant rainfall it is expected that a lot of livestock, already weakened by hunger, will perish from disease outbreaks. This will offset the return to production by the surviving animals and therefore food security is not expected to improve too significantly over the coming month.

HIRAN

Information for this area was kindly supplied by Save the Children UK and is centred around Belet Weyne district only. The first rains fell in Belet Weyne on 19th October and were not uniform, with the riverine area receiving less than the *wadi* and rainfed areas, which have been able to plant. The areas planted does not seem to have changed and in the riverine areas farmers are borrowing money or selling livestock to purchase fuel and to take advantage of the high river levels. Providing there is a reasonable harvest and markets are reasonably stable, farmers will be able to recover the cost of their inputs. Generally, livestock have recovered somewhat but cattle are still most at risk and have the worst condition. This is because the remaining grazing sources meagre and of poor quality and are heavily overused. The river continued to rise and measurements at Belet Weyne town showed a level of 275 cm at the end of the month, compared with 50 cm on the 15th, and with a maximum of 280 cm last year.

COWPEA BELT

There was very little rain in this area except in the northern parts around Hobyo, Xara Dheere, Galhareri and Adsanyabal settlements. Grazing is still insufficient, even in the places that have received rain. Prices for a given quality of animal have increased but poor pasture has meant that most animals' condition has deteriorated. Disease is not widespread. Farmers have begun preparing their land, especially in the areas that have received rainfall. As this belt relies more on imported cereals, food security has declined with the rising cost of the US dollar, and the attempts to stop the circulation of 500/- notes has impacted on those communities who live far from the centres. There is a possibility that households may migrate to Mogadishu or Jowhar, given their inability to purchase sufficient food.

BAY

As in Bakool, rainfall for the *Deyr* season began during the second *dekad* of October. At first, most of it was concentrated in Baidoa District but later some fell in Burhakaba and occasionally showers in Berdale and Qansax-Dheere, the latter having most of its rain concentrated around Ufuru village, which is the most productive centre of the district. This has improved pasture and water availability, as well as allowing farmers to replant some sorghum (normally, farmers in this area ratoon their *Gu* crop during the *Deyr* season but this year they will have to replant as the *Gu* was an almost complete failure). Where there has been some rain, wealthier farmers may try and recover some of their *Gu* losses, creating opportunities for agricultural employment, although these appear to be scattered and patchy at present. Productive members who migrated elsewhere (usually to Lower Shabelle, Baardheere and Middle Juba) in search of wage labour are returning for the *Deyr*. Dinsor received very little rain and pastoralists from this area have moved into Baidoa District. Labour rates are low and have not kept pace with currency deflation. There has been a steady rise in Somali shillings for cereals, although dollar prices have remained low. This has the dual effect of placing the goods out of reach for the poor and very poor (predominantly purchasers who earn low-rate local wages), while not earning enough for the wealthier households (predominantly sellers who need hard cash for their imported goods and for inputs). As in other areas, imported goods are very expensive, following the continued slide of the shilling.

BAKOOL

This year the *Deyr* rains started during the second *dekad* of October, reckoned to be 'on time'. In general, pastoral areas have received 2-3 days of rain and this has improved browsing and grazing; farming areas have also received something and this has allowed newly planted seeds to germinate. However, farmers are far from having secured a *Deyr* harvest, e.g. in the high potential area around Madhayto (N. of Wajid), the area only received one day of rainfall and newly-germinated crops will die if no further rains are received shortly. Other farming areas around Tayeglow and Xudur appear to have had slightly more rain, although the situation is still quite critical. Cattle, which have been most affected by the dry spell, are expected to recover over the coming month and become more productive and acquire a better market value. Camels and shoats are expected to be in normal condition over the month ahead. There are reports of an influx of livestock from Gedo into Wajid district, mostly shoats and cattle, and this is worrying pastoral groups from Bakool, because of competition and the possibility of outbreak of disease. So far, there have been no outbreaks. Terms of trade for pastoral groups have remained quite favourable but are bad for the poor and very poor agro-pastoral groups, mainly because wage rates have not kept pace with the rising cost of staple food and of dollars (affecting imported commodities, including some cereals).

JUBA VALLEY

Until the very end of October, there had not been any rainfall in this region. This has changed spectacularly and concern has now been expressed about rising river levels, breaking embankments and flooding. Jilib is particularly affected with seven villages flooded and a further two villages in Buale have also been flooded. At present, Sakow is still dry but residents are worried. Pasture and water for livestock are still deteriorating, due to competition from immigrants and the poor rains during *Gu* in the pastoral areas. Terms of trade for animals to grain are still quite favourable, however, livestock condition has been in decline and sales are consequently reduced. Land preparation in areas along the river has boosted opportunities for income from agricultural labour. The regions have also experienced an increase in IDP's with all the militia and troop movements taking place. Insecurity, disruption of trade, inflation, low income levels, migration and high local prices for staples have all combined to decrease food security in the valley.