

EDITORIAL

In Gedo the livelihoods of the poor herders, representing possibly 80% of the remaining population, are becoming unsustainable. Increased relief interventions are urgently needed to address hunger and to save lives. Several years of drought and continuing conflict have accentuated the structural problems associated with the region. However, Gedo has become increasingly vulnerable over recent months. Recognised as a special case, the August FSAU assessment reported vulnerable groups in the region as only accessing between 1400-1600 Kcals/p/d. Until recently, CARE has been striving to keep the situation under control with food deliveries reaching vulnerable households with at least one member malnourished. Only a month ago many pastoralist households appeared to be coping, even though at some considerable cost, with this level of intervention. However, recent developments have highlighted the need for an increased response. Over the last 4-6 weeks several additional factors have contributed to a rapid deterioration including reduced access to milk, constraints to cross-border trade and livestock movements, and the impact of reduced food/income opportunities in Ethiopia and Kenya being compounded by local conflicts and bigger political tensions.

All the above must remind us of two things. Firstly, this is not the first time the area has faced similar crises and, often defined as a structural problem, the need for open exchange with humanitarian groups and decision-makers in Ethiopia and Kenya is obvious but delicate. Secondly, what lessons can be learnt for other pastoral groups also subject to compounding shocks and similar threats to lives rather than livelihoods?

Vulnerable pockets of pastoralists are also identified in Central and Northern regions. Some will cope but others, stacking up enough negative factors to tip them over the edge, are at risk. Agro and agro-pastoral economies are known to weaken more gradually but pastoralists generally manage until the final additional shock is the "last straw" that tips the balance from sustaining livelihoods to saving lives.

HIGHLIGHTS

FOOD SECURITY IN GEDO REMAINS NUMBER ONE CONCERN : The deteriorating situation in Gedo has raised concern among agencies operating in the region, especially in the light of the recent tightening of the border closure by the Kenyan authorities. This has led to a reduction in trading activities and population movements, which has impacted on the supply of food (some of it relief), making its way into Somalia from Ethiopia and Kenya. This has come on top of a widespread drought that is killing livestock and causing an influx of people to the main centres, where services are extremely limited. The drought is the culmination of three bad years of rain, coupled with sporadic insecurity. The supplementary feeding centre in Luuq is being overloaded by malnourished people. (For more detailed information see the FSAU Focus issued October 2001 and FSAU Nutrition Update October 2001). The SACB Gedo Working group meeting on Tuesday 9th October 2001 recommended several action points, the most important being the need for increased food aid rations (both in terms of quantity (more cereals) and quality (a better balance of nutrients)) and coverage (more decentralised) as well as the establishment of more supplementary feeding programmes.

DEYR RAINS BEGIN IN NORTH EAST AND NORTH WEST SOMALIA : Moderate rains fell in most parts of Togdheer, Sool and Sanag regions in the North. *Deyr* rains also commenced in some of the drought affected areas of the *Haud* of Togdheer, including Buhoodle. Another area of concern, Goldogob has received some rain. The coastal area close to the Djibouti border continues to remain dry.

SORGHUM PRICES INCREASING IN THE SOUTH : After the poor *Gu* 2001 crop results in most rain-fed areas, sorghum prices have generally increased throughout Southern Somalia in September. Cereal prices are now starting to increase significantly in Gedo, Bakool and Hiran regions. Maize prices went down significantly immediately after the harvest in the main irrigated areas, but they are still twice as high as they were last year at the same period when expressed in Somali currency.

PIPELINE SITUATION : WFP currently holds an actual stock of 5,000 MT but had estimated 6,000 MT would have been required until the end of the year. Much more will be required if the *Deyr* is poor. WFP has already initiated an increase in food distributions during September and further increases are envisaged to continue through early 2002. WFP made an appeal in August to enable a pipeline of 20 000 MT to meet their needs until mid 2002. Since then, the Netherlands have pledged some 670 MT while the EC has made a proposal for 3,000 MT. WFP continues its efforts to obtain pledges to meet the balance. CARE holds 2678 MT in its warehouse, (of which CARE distributed approx 1478 MT food during September) another 6000 MT is expected in October and 3110 MT is expected in November. (1600 MT sorghum and 1510 MT maize) .

FSAU FOOD RELIEF TABLE BY DISTRICT : In response to the SACB Food Aid Working Group which met in September, FSAU has compiled and distributed a food relief table by district to WFP, CARE, ICRC, EU, USAID and UNDP (based on a scenario that *Deyr* crop production will be 30-35% of average production) It is hoped that CARE, WFP, ICRC will contribute information on their food relief projects in each of the districts, on a monthly basis, so as to highlight shortfalls in the availability of food relief to these organisations. Please contact alex.williams@fsau.or.ke for a copy of the table.

Highlights from FSAU 'Nutrition Update'

Gedo

Gedo continues to be the region of greatest concern in Somalia. ACF, CARE and international organisations operating in the border areas within Kenya have reported worrying levels of malnutrition. The limited access to the region for international organisations in recent months remains a major constraint in the delivery of an appropriate response. CARE continues targeted food aid distribution in the region and ACF supports both therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes, the only ones functioning in the region. Gedo Health Consortium is experiencing severe limitations in capacity due to lack of funding. On October 9, concerned organisations will meet to assess the current capacity of organisations to respond to the

worsening situation in Gedo.

WFP/UNICEF/IMC targeted intervention

This initiative commenced in September in Rabdure and Huddur and involves supplementary and family rations for malnourished children along with diagnosis, treatment, immunisation and outreach activities. Expansion of the activity is being considered.

Nutrition surveys

During October, nutrition surveys are planned in Awdal, Toghdheer, Galgodob, Rabdure and Qansaxdheere.

Final reports on nutrition surveys in Hargeisa and Eldere are now available.

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

CLIMATIC OUTLOOK FOR THE 2001 DEYR SEASON

In the last week of August, experts specializing in climate from the Greater Horn of Africa, gathered in Jinja, Uganda, for the *Eighth Climate Outlook Forum*. The main objective was to reach a consensus on the climate outlook in the region for the period September to December 2001. This period corresponds to the *Deyr* rainy season in Somalia, which has become critical, due to the poor *Gu* rains (April-June) in some areas of the country earlier this year.

Other participants at the meeting were users of climate information, including representation from the newly established Somalia Transitional National Government. (TNG) In the absence of more recent rainfall data, the TNG representative was able to contribute historical information which assisted in developing the climatic outlook for the coming *Deyr* season.

The *Forum* reviewed the global climate system trends and associated implications for the Eastern Africa Sub-region. It also discussed the observed and predicted sea surface temperatures in the Pacific ocean and over much of the Atlantic and Indian oceans. This assists in forecasting the likelihood of rainfall in specific regions. The *Forum* concluded that the 1998-2000 La Nina episode (where below average sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean were recorded) had decayed and sea surface temperatures over the Pacific Ocean were now near normal. Sea surface temperatures are expected to remain near normal for the next few months. While the Pacific ocean is showing signs of warming, a new El Nino event is unlikely to develop in this period.

PROBABILITY OF RAIN DISTRIBUTION

After four days of discussions, a seasonal forecast was made, establishing probability of rain distributions, which indicate the likelihood of below normal, near normal or above-normal rainfall for the region. Above-normal rainfall is defined as within the wettest third of recorded rainfall amounts in each zone; near-normal is defined as the third centered around the climatologically median; below-normal rainfall as within the driest third of the rainfall amounts.

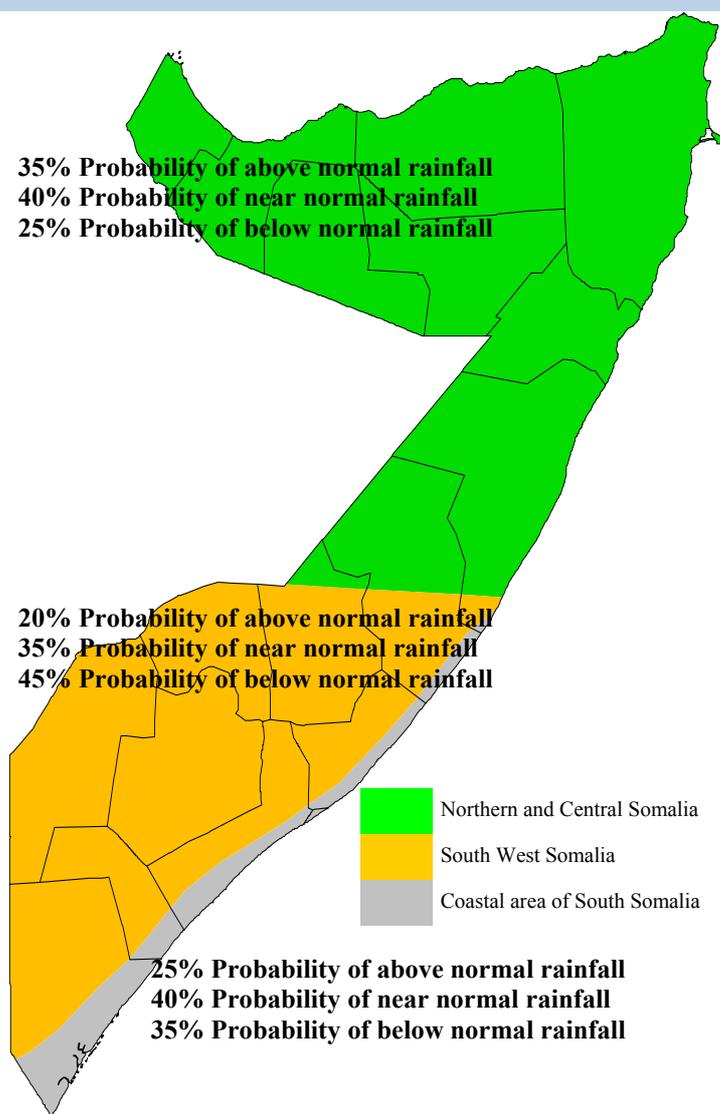
As seen in the map opposite, the forecast for Somalia divided the country into three zones. In southwestern Somalia, there is an increased likelihood of below-normal (45% probability) to near-normal (35% probability) rainfall in the coming *Deyr* season (October- December). In this zone, there is only 20% probability that rainfall levels will fall in the above- normal category. In contrast, in the coastal areas of southern Somalia, there is an increased likelihood of near-normal (40% probability) to below normal (35% probability) rainfall in the coming *Deyr* seasons. In this zone, there is 25% probability that rainfall levels will fall in the above- normal category. Again, prospects seem relatively better for the central and northern regions of Somalia, where an increased likelihood of near- normal (40% probability) to above- normal (35% probability) rainfall is predicted. In this zone, the probability that rainfall will be below- normal is 25%.

The *Forum* has however cautioned that this forecast is relevant only to seasonal time scales and relatively large areas. Local and month-to-month variations may occur.

CONCLUSIONS

Given the fact that rainfall failed in many agricultural regions of southern Somalia in the last *Gu* season, this increased likelihood of below-normal rainfall forecast for Bay, Bakol, Gedo and Hiran during September-December 2001 gives cause for concern. FEWSNET Somalia and FSAU alongside their partners will be working together to carefully monitor rainfall levels, crop and livestock production prospects as the *Deyr*- 2001 season approaches.

Map Showing probability of rainfall over Somalia during the *Deyr* Season (October-December 2001)



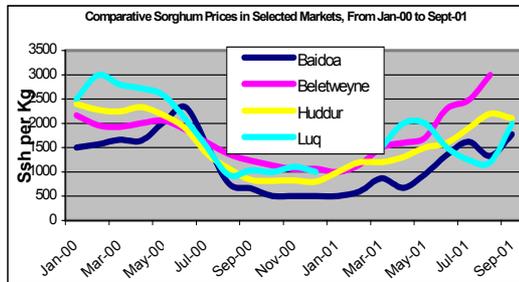
SOURCE : DROUGHT MONITORING CENTRE NAIROBI

DEYR RAINS COMMENCE IN NORTH EAST AND NORTH WEST

Moderate rains fell in most parts of Togdheer, Sool and Sanag regions in the North. *Deyr* rains also commenced in some of the drought affected areas of the *Haud* of Togdheer, including Buhoodle . Rains also started around Las Canood and Yugoori. All the water catchments (berkads and balleys) were partially or totally filled in these areas. As normal at the onset of rains, a large number of livestock deaths have been reported. When the *Deyr* rains commence the livestock are already weak from the prolonged dry spell. Many have been infested with parasites making them easily susceptible to respiratory infections such as pneumonia and die as a result. However the arrival of the *Deyr* rains has also brought hope to pastoralists in the region whose livestock have suffered badly over the last couple of drought years. The coastal area close to the Djibouti border, continues to be dry and rain is not expected until December. The other area of concern, Goldogob has received some rainfall.

SORGHUM PRICES INCREASING AFTER POOR GU HARVEST

Cereal prices did not drop in most rain-fed areas of southern Somalia after the poor Gu 2001 sorghum production. Moreover, sorghum prices already started to increase in August/September in most relevant markets. Bay region, which normally provides more than the half of the national sorghum production, underwent a bad crop failure this year. Retail sorghum prices gradually increased from 1,200 Ssh/kg early August to 2,000 Ssh/kg by the end of September, which is abnormally high at post-harvest time (last year, at the same period, sorghum prices were particularly low as a result of the good Gu 2000 harvest: 500-600 Ssh/kg). In Huddur (Bakool), where cereal prices are always higher than in Bay, the value of 1 kg of sorghum rose from 2,000 Ssh end of July to 2,500 Ssh end of August. The price of the 50 kg bag stabilized at about 100-110,000 Ssh in September (compared to 40,000 Ssh one year ago). In southern Somalia, the highest sorghum prices have been observed this month in L. Juba (Kismayo, 3,000 Ssh/kg), but also in Hiran (3,000 Ssh/kg since August). Prices in Luuq (Gedo) have remained relatively low up to August (partly due to food aid interventions), but drastically increased during September (see graph).



HEALTH

MALARIA : High incidence of severe malaria reported by IMC in Dinsor district.
MEASLES : Significant increase in the incidence reported at the ACF therapeutic feeding centre in Mogadishu and in villages of Eldere and Haradheere districts.
CHOLERA : Suspected cases in Galcayo. Annual review and preparedness planning for coming year scheduled to take place in October.
MENINGITIS : No cases reported. Outbreak in Ethiopia now under control.
RABIES : Suspected cases in Haradheere. Vaccine available from WHO in Mogadishu and Nairobi.
MALARIA CONTROL ACTIVITIES : WHO has announced plans to scale up malaria control activities in Somalia. The planned activities will include: (i) Intermittent presumptive treatment for pregnant women, (ii) emergency preparedness, (iii) Promotion of the use of impregnated bed-nets & (iv) vector control.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONTIORS >> P.4

NW & AWDAL

Food security is generally normal except for poor pastoralists in the coastal and sub-coastal belt and the displaced in Hargeysa. This group have not received rain for 13 months, resulting in most migrating to different areas within Awdal and to Zone V. Very poor pastoralists were unable to migrate and lost hundreds of their livestock and are in a critical situation. Without intervention no improvement can be expected until the December rains, however recovery is expected to be slow due to the high number of animals that have died and the poor condition of the remaining animals. There have been erratic rains in the agro-pastoral areas and more rain is still required for a good harvest especially as more maize than normal has been planted and maize is more susceptible to water stress. The high temperatures in Gebilay and Borame areas may have a negative impact on crop production.

N-NUGAL & S- BARI

The lifting of the livestock ban a few months ago by UAE and Oman has enabled local markets to increase their absorption capacity and there are the start of signs indicating normal trading for export slowly reappearing. However, purchasing power for pastoralists continues to be severely reduced as the price of an export goat (in USD terms) has decreased by 59% Lobster traders also be active during October and November. The Hagai winds this year have been mild and are now subsiding and the weather is becoming typically hot and humid. During September there have been sporadic rain showers throughout the Golis range. The rainfall in Gardo district has attracted the pastoralists from areas where water and grazing conditions had deteriorated such as North-eastern Nugal valley some have even used trucks to transport their shoats over long distances. The booming construction industry in Garowe and Gardo is assisting to alleviate the impact of the high inflation in these urban centres.

SOOL

The poor Gu rains, the continuing livestock ban to the important Gulf markets and the high inflation rates continue to negatively affect the food security situation for the poor pastoralists. The influx of livestock because of the deteriorating situation in Buhoodle has put increased pressure on the already limited water and pasture resources in the region. Water prices have increased dramatically (quadrupled) making water unaffordable to the poorer pastoralists. The scattered rain towards the end of the month will help to alleviate this situation, but livestock condition is not expected to improve quickly. Animal diseases of epidemic proportion have been reported in the congested livestock areas. Camel pox is said to have killed many of the affected camel calves in Haud and Nugal, high death rates have also been reported amongst sheep. However, TT are improving for the pastoralists, a local quality goat can buy a bag of sorghum. But as the livestock condition and production is poor many pastoralists will soon have nothing to sell.

S-NUGAL & N-MUDUG

The hagai started earlier than normal and only towards the end of September became less intense. Sporadic and light rains have been reported in some areas. The impact of the drought especially in Galdogob has resulted in poor livestock condition and production. Herd size is shrinking for the poor pastoralists making their food security situation more precarious. Water availability has decreased, including the permanent water points, berkads are 90% empty, water trucking has intensified and the price of water has increased dramatically in the Haud FEZ. Herds have moved to permanent water sources putting increasing pressure on these already limited water sources. There is little-market activity and the terms of trade for the pastoralists is not in their favour as cereal prices continue to rise. Accessing income has become more difficult as labour opportunities are poor.

BARI REGION

Overall food security situation is normal except for a few pockets in Gagaab and coastal delimitation eco-zones where water shortages and poor pasture prevail. In Iyah and Sool, poor pasture conditions and increased pressure from migration along grazing plains are also threatening the livelihoods of pastoralists. However, the Deyr rains have arrived, starting early in September with considerable amounts falling in Dharoor eco-zone. Livestock and milk production is recovering. Sea trading has also resumed increasing employment opportunities, (herding livestock export, construction and portaging activities) with livestock trade to UAE and Oman. Seasonal human migration to coastal areas is expected later this month, as lobster fishing season is due to recommence. This migration has a positive impact among the poor pastoral population as lobster-fishing activities contribute to large portion of pastoral households' income sources.

SANAG & TOGHDEER

The food security situation is normal to slightly below normal with the exception of Haud. The karan rains have caused the pastoralists to migrate from the coastal and foot hill areas to the mountainous zones in the region. To replace the lost income from the livestock trade many people are involved in the charcoal trade. Buhoodle district in Haud has reached a critical situation due to the impact of the poor rains, high inflation rates and the livestock export ban. The water and pasture are virtually exhausted. This resulted in water and fodder (for the first time in this area) trucking operations and huge out migration. The livestock condition and production is poor and there have been high death rates among shoats and cattle and it was reported that a lot of pregnant camels have aborted during the Hagai. Even with the Deyr rains the recovery rate is expected to be slow due to the high mortality rates and livestock abortions.

>> P.4 REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS AS REPORTED BY FSAU FIELD MONITORS

HIRAN

Gu rains were poor and the condition of pasture and livestock has deteriorated as has milk production. Camel and shoats are now feeling the affect of drought and many cattle are now kept inside - being fed by off season fodder of maize and concentrates. A larger than normal area of land is being prepared for the Deyr. The Deyr rains have now become critical to the survival of livestock in the region.

GEDO

The recent tightening of the Kenya/Somalia border; leading to stricter enforcement of travel restrictions and the trade ban, the choking off of grain flows from Ethiopia, and the prolongation of the drought in northern Gedo has deepened food insecurity to the point of crisis. Reports are coming in of animal deaths, while those households that are able are hand feeding to keep them alive. The remaining coping strategies (after the sale of livestock is removed) have been further stretched with high competition for the resources. Livestock sales are a key element for pastoral or agro-pastoral coping, which was in any case, predicted to be insufficient to meet all household requirements. There are now movements of whole families from villages to the main towns and in particular, to Luuq, where ACF have a supplementary feeding programme; and indications (from screening at health centres) show that there is rapidly increasing malnutrition. Poor and middle agro-pastoral households have no cereal stocks, except that which has been acquired from relief food distributions, farms from the rainfed areas got virtually nothing in the last Gu and coping strategies are diverting household efforts away from clearing and planting activities for the coming Deyr season. The lack of availability coupled with high prices for inputs has impaired irrigated farming, especially critical in providing labour opportunities. Livestock are in very poor condition, especially cattle and sheep. Prices of staples, however, remained normal while imported commodities are very high (in Somali Shillings). There is a high rate of malnutrition among children from 6 months to 11 years and in pregnant women. Security has not deteriorated this month.

LOWER SHABELLE

There has been no rain this month, while temperatures have been hot and humid. Water catchments still contain water and access is considered normal. The Shabelle River, although at the highest level so far this year, is not yet expected to flood. Browsing animals still have sufficient pasture but cattle require feeding with stalks and grasses from irrigated fields, however animals remain in good condition. Some new maize fields were planted 50 km north of Afgooye but it is expected that these will only supply fodder. This part of the region has poor household cereal stocks. In the irrigated areas Deyr season clearing is ongoing and planting has begun. Pay rates for agricultural labour improved slightly this month. Sorghum increased slightly in price (Somali shilling value), while maize came down by 30%. Imported items are affected by the Somali shilling/US dollar exchange rate. There have been reports of insecurity and banditry in Afgooye district.

BAY

No rains fell this month and the weather was hot and dry resulting in pasture and grazing being below normal. During the middle of the month, farmers started clearing and preparing land, which improved opportunities for labour among the poor and very poor households. WFP and Care also increased their Food For Work (FFW) activities (working on 48 water catchments and over 100 km of rural roads throughout the region), which have been seen as beneficial to communities, both in terms of providing food and in improving services and access to water. The FFW is also said to have reduced the migration of families from rural areas to the towns. Cattle need to be hand fed and prices for sorghum stalks have gone up. Nevertheless, browsing remains sufficient for shoats and camels to cope. There has been a marked increase in the number of people engaging in self-employment activities such as bush products, water collection and selling, petty trading and tea shops. The weekly travel day to Mogadishu is now on Mondays; and the prices of imported items have risen in response to the continued decline of the Somali shilling.

COWPEA BELT

There was little rainfall this month, only light showers from the coastal line. Water prices are rising and the number of wells and boreholes providing clean water decreasing. Land clearing, preparation and seedbed arranging for cowpeas has started in anticipation of the Deyr season. Pasture declined in both quantity and quality, especially between Gaikacyo, Ceel Dheer, Hobyo and Dhusa Mareeb settlements. Consequently, livestock condition in these areas has declined markedly, along with milk and meat production. There are some livestock sales, mostly to the UAE. Except for some fishing activities, job opportunities are scarce and self-employment possibilities limited. Security remains calm.

BAKOL

There has been no rain in this district and distances to water point have become very long, mostly affecting cattle. There have been no reported outbreaks of disease. Milk production is below normal for this of the year but prices remain good. Terms of trade between goats and staple are favourable, due to the healthy prices that are being fetched for livestock (livestock prices have matched the devaluation of the Somali shilling). Goats now fetch 160-170,000/- and a 50 kg bag of cereal costs 105,000/-. Staple prices are relatively stable but are above normal. However, the 'poor' and 'very poor' wealth groups in most food economies are feeling the pinch and are resorting to coping strategies for survival: self-employment activities, seeking food aid (from the MCH clinic run by IMC) and agricultural labour (preparing fields for the coming Deyr season). Prices for imported items have risen in tandem with the cost of foreign currency and this area suffers higher prices for imported goods than elsewhere due to the long distances and the road taxes levied on the main Mogadishu road.

JUBA VALLEY

Food security has remained normal, except in Xagar and Afmadow where cereals are in short supply and prices are high. Poor families in this area are predicted to be facing a food deficit this year, unless the coming Deyr season and the security situation improve. The insecurity that took place during previous months and the Kenyan border closure have seriously restricted trade and remittances from relatives. The influx of pastoralists and their animals from Gedo has continued, increasing competition for water and grazing access.

MIDDLE SHABELLE

There has been no rain this month, although water is available from shallow wells and the Shabelle River. Land preparation for the coming Deyr season is underway and maize has been planted. The high river level allows for some gravity-fed irrigation, although the suspension of NGO project activities means that repairs and de-silting have stalled, as has the opening of more channels. Household cereal stocks are normal and farmers are selling small amounts to cover other needs. However, Livestock condition, especially for cattle, is below normal, impacting on milk yields. There have no reported outbreaks of disease. Cereal prices (in terms of shillings) are stable, although prices for imported commodities has risen due to the declining Somali shilling.