



FEWS NET /Somalia

# Monthly Food Security Report for Somalia

December 2000—January 2001



Food Security Assessment Unit

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This report is a joint publication of FSAU and the USAID Famine Early Warning System (FEWS NET) for Somalia and for this issue, UNCU has provided valuable inputs to p 4 and 5.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The continuing low cereal prices in the main production areas of the south have resulted in reduced area of staple crops under cultivation and a shift to cash crops especially by commercial farmers. A reported increase in “share cropping” in irrigated areas may compensate for lower production expected from rain-fed areas where the *Deyr* harvest has been affected by moisture stress, insect and bird damage combined with uneven rainfall distribution.
- In the north, favorable climatic conditions have greatly improved livestock health, conception rates and production in most areas of N-Somalia, the exception being the *Hawd* of Togdheer where near destitute pastoral households experience a critical situation resulting from reduced income from livestock sales, poor rains and overgrazed pastures.
- Terms of trade for unskilled labour continue to deteriorate in most northern markets. Income from goat sales are reported to be 40-50% lower than for the same period 12 months ago in Burao.
- Exchange rates: Somaliland markets are reported as stable but in general the Somali shilling continues to depreciate with a 3% drop reported from Mogadishu
- Trade activities: Imported commodity prices are reported to be increasing in most inland markets and this is associated with increased transport costs. In the coming months, food imports are predicted to decline with reduced income from livestock sales impacting on normal purchasing patterns.
- Livestock trade in the south remains un-affected by the loss of the Saudi-Arabian market. Milk supply and sales are high in the Juba valley markets and cereal prices are reported to be normal.
- Recent nutrition surveys continue to show high malnutrition rates despite general improved food availability.
- At the onset of the *Jilaal* (dry) season, livestock are reported to be following normal movement patterns away from wet season pasture and water catchments. For agriculturalists in the south this provides an opportunity for canal maintenance as river levels drop.

## Crop Assessment Workshop

FSAU will be holding a *Deyr* Crop Assessment workshop in mid-February in Baidoa, followed by a Household Food Economy Analysis Training. FSAU field monitors from S-Somalia as well as Nairobi based FSAU and FEWS technical staff, will be participating. Results of the presentations and discussions on the crop harvest outcome and on their implications for food security will be made available in a ‘Focus’.

## GOOD RAINS HELP MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF CONTINUING LIVESTOCK MARKETING CONSTRAINTS

While substantial income is being lost at macro and household level, limiting the purchase of many goods (including medicines) and accelerating the depletion of assets, the worst effects of the livestock ban – on food insecurity – are being mitigated by unusually good livestock production and reproduction (milk for consumption and sale) and unusually low local cereal prices and Ethiopian relief wheat grain which leaked into Somalia.

Exceptions to the above are the urban poor and IDPs in and around most towns,

but particularly in and around the heavily livestock dependent towns of Burao, Bosasso and Galkayo. Poor pastoralists in the *Hawd* of Togdheer and in Goldogob district are included in this category. FSAU monitors and nutritionists considered food insecurity and malnutrition a cause of increasing concern within these groups

With the good, late *Deyr* rains in most places the long, dry *Jilaal* season may not be as severe as normal in most areas, in terms of livestock condition and production, assuming the timely onset of

the *Gu* rains in late March/early April.

However, the *Jilaal* season is normally the time of greatest market dependence—high animal sales and high consumption requirements (food and water).

Adequate access to food and water, given the market failure caused by the livestock ban, will further threaten livelihoods for many groups so far managing the crisis, but push those groups on or over the edge, into further crisis.

(See regional summaries, p. 5-6)

## RAINFALL DECLINES IN DECEMBER AS JILAL (DRY) SEASON UNFOLDS

No rainfall was recorded in the 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad of December 2000 and during January 2001. This is consistent with the historical rainfall records, particularly in southern Somalia

Satellite imagery shows light rainfall in most of Lower Juba and parts of Middle Juba, Gedo and Bay regions during the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of December. There were virtually no rainfall events in the rest of Somalia during this dekad. The absence of rainfall in the typically sorghum growing areas of southern Somalia such as Bay, Bakol, Middle/Lower Shabelle and Hiran during this dekad had some negative impact on the late-planted sorghum crops (25%-30%) which were at flowering and grain filling stages.

A comparison between current and normal rainfall for this time of year shows slightly more than normal rainfall in parts of Lower Juba region. In contrast, rainfall was slightly less than normal in small areas of Lower Shabelle (Wanle-weyn

district) and Gedo regions. The rest of Somalia was seasonably dry during this dekad. Like in the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad, most of Somalia received virtually no rainfall during the 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad of December. In southern Somalia, light rainfall was remotely sensed only in the border area between Somalia and Kenya (Lower Juba, Gedo) and in small area of Middle Juba region. Reliable reports from the field did not however, confirm such rainfall events in these regions during this dekad. On the contrary, fairly good and widespread rainfall was reported in Bay region on 17 December 2000. Similarly, there were reports of light showers in the pastoral areas of Hiran region during this dekad. Meteosat satellite did not remotely sense these rainfall events in Bay and Hiran. A comparison between current and normal rainfall of December shows no difference, i.e. Somalia was seasonably dry during this dekad.

### VEGETATION—NDVI

As a result of the good to heavy rainfall that fell over most of central and southern Somalia during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> dekads of November, satellite imagery shows light to medium vegetation in these areas. In particular, medium vegetation was remotely sensed in Bay and in the coastal areas of Middle/Lower Shabelle and Middle/Lower Juba during the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of December. Vegetation gradually deteriorated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> dekads of December throughout Somalia. Very light or dry vegetation is seen over most of central and northern regions throughout December. Compared to the historical average, there was slightly better to much better than normal vegetation in most of central regions of Somalia (Bay, Bakol, Middle Shabelle, Hiran, Galgadud) and in small areas of Mudug, Nugal, Sool and

Togdheer regions during the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of December. Vegetation was instead, slightly worse than normal in the southern regions of Somalia (Lower Shabelle, Middle/Lower Juba and Gedo regions) as well as at the tip of the north-eastern regions of Somalia in the 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of December.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> dekads of December, vegetation condition became slightly worse to much worse than normal in most of southern, central and north-western regions of Somalia (Somaliland). Spots with slightly better than normal vegetation are seen in Middle Shabelle, Galgadud, Hiran, Bay and Lower Shabelle regions.

Other areas were seen to follow normal trends.

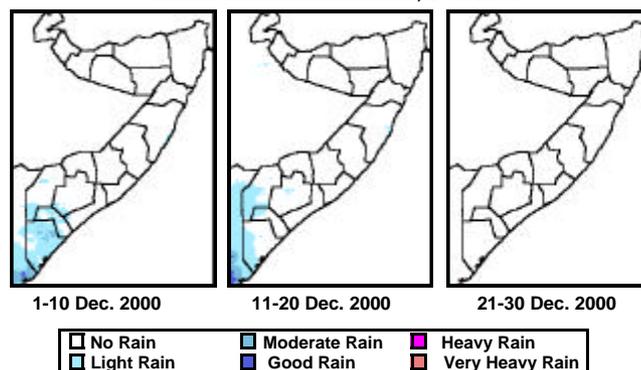
Please note, that due to similar climatic conditions over the following months no satellite images will be displayed.

### LOW RIVER LEVELS ALLOW REHABILITATION

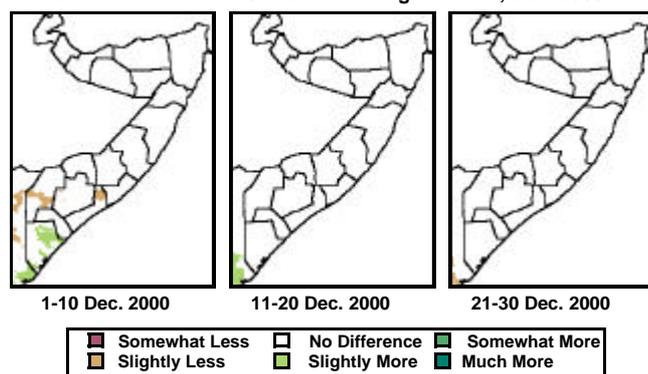
The FSAU Field Monitors reported that the volume of water in both Juba and Shabelle rivers significantly decreased from the beginning of December 2000. This is consistent with the historical records according to which Shabelle and Juba river levels usually drop below 2m and 1.5m respectively during *Jilal* season (December-March). Because of the larger, nearly unmanageable size of Juba River, controlled gravity irrigation is not practiced in Juba Valley. In contrast, controlled gravity irrigation is practiced in many parts of Middle and Lower Shabelle regions in most of the year (8-9 months). The drop of the Shabelle River level during *Jilal* season is not usually welcomed for it deprives many farmers the

possibility to use gravity irrigation for the late-planted crops, but it gives farmers time to rehabilitate their secondary and tertiary canals. In the past it was common practice during this season for the the ministry of agriculture to clear the silt sediments and other materials from the river (river dredging) and main canals at this time of year. Major rehabilitation of river embankments and maintenance of sluice gates were carried out during *Jilal*. The drop of the river levels is the best opportunity to rehabilitate river embankments, hence avoiding devastating floods in the coming April-May and September-November periods. For more information, consult: <http://www.fao.org/gIEWS/english/basedocs/som/somt0c1e.htm>

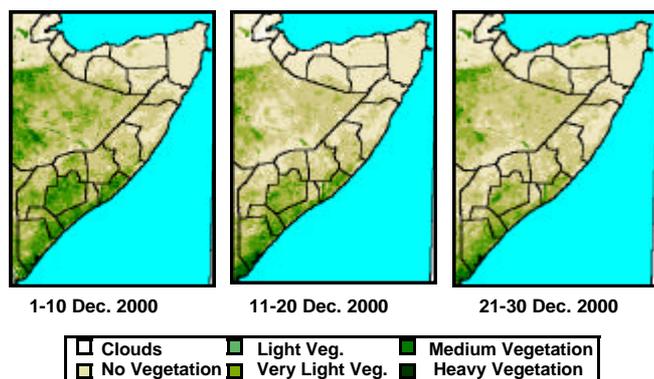
Meteosat Rainfall Estimates, Dec. 2000



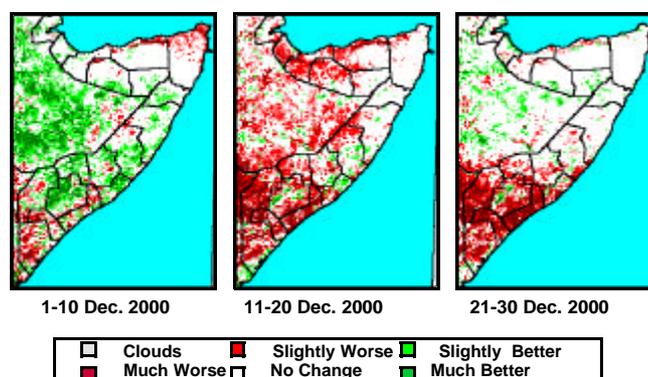
Difference between Current & Average Rainfall, Dec. 2000



NDVI: Vegetation, Dec. 2000



Difference between Normal & Current NDVI, Dec. 2000



## DEYR SEASON — CROP SITUATION IN SOUTHERN SOMALIA

The 2000 *Deyr* crop harvest assessment is in progress. Field work was carried out by FSAU Field Monitors at the end of January and an internal workshop will take place in Somalia in early February. Results will be made available in a Focus.

Normal *Deyr* rainfall was observed in early October and in the second decade of November across southern Somalia. Early estimates indicate that about 280,000 Ha were planted in the *Deyr* 2000, of which 75% sorghum and 25% maize. As seen in the table below, the total planted area in 2000 was higher than in 1999 and 1998, with significantly more sorghum and less maize.

The reduction in irrigated maize planted area in Lower Shabelle was predictable (stocks of maize and sorghum still

Crop Establishment Area (Ha), Comparison: *Deyr* 00/01, *Deyr* 99/00 & *Deyr* 98/99 — Source: FSAU

<i>Deyr</i>	Sorghum	Maize	Total
1998/1999	147,500	91,400	238,900
1999/2000	137,000	90,200	227,200
2000/2001	207,800	71,300	279,100

available and low cereal prices since last *Gu*). Commercial farmers of Middle and Lower Shabelle shifted to cash crops. The outstanding harvest of sesame that was expected in January in the Shabelle valley might be reduced by insect damage.

According to FSAU Field Monitors, area under maize would have dropped even further if the farmers who have experienced successive poor harvests in rainfed areas did not hire vast irrigated lands for the season and embark on "share cropping". High river water levels from September to end of November 2000 were

very useful for gravity irrigation in the Lower and Middle Shabelle regions (good yields forecasted). On the other hand, poor rain-dependent maize production is expected in the Shabelles.

After successful establishment, sorghum experienced a 25-30 day dry spell in southern Somalia. A good *Deyr* sorghum production is expected in Bay region due to a favourable rainy season (poor "ratoon" production, but significant increase in seed planted area).

Generally, *Deyr* season accounts for 25-30% of the annual cereal production of southern Somalia. At establishment time, the total projected production was estimated at approximately 110,000 MT (55-60 % sorghum and 40-45 % maize), which can be considered as good for southern Somalia. Indeed, this would be close to last year's *Deyr* production and better than *Deyr* 98/99 (+39 %) and the post-war average (+42 %). However, according to the latest field reports, the final output of the season might be significantly below the expectations due to moisture stress (on sorghum/rainfed maize) and insect and bird damage (sorghum).

Juba valley is still an area of concern with poor prospects for both *dheshek* maize and sorghum production—mainly due to poor rainfall. Very low yields are expected from rainfed sorghum in Gedo. *Dheshek* sesame will be harvested in February/March in Lower/Middle Juba.

The last *Gu* cropping season was good in general. About 102,000 MT of maize (major contribution from Lower Shabelle) and 110,000 MT of sorghum (good harvest in Bay/Bakool) were produced. However, below normal production was recorded in the Juba valley regions (see Focus *Gu* 2000, also available at: [www.unsomalia.org](http://www.unsomalia.org) under 'Food Security')

## HIGH CALVING/KIDDING RATES IN N/SOMALIA HELP ALLEVIATE MARKETING CONSTRAINTS

High birth rates for all livestock types are noted in most areas of northern Somalia. This is a reflection of good climatic conditions in the past two to three seasons which have improved livestock health and conception rates. In addition, El Nino related diseases (affecting camels in particular) generally diminished by late 1999, improving conception rates. Increased births and the resulting relative abundance of milk has important benefits for both food consumption and income and in addition, allows ghee (fat) to be produced and stored for the dry season. These positive conditions are likely to have beneficial effects for the next two seasons, as good conception rates currently will maintain high birthing rates. These high birth rates combined with limited off-take (livestock ban) point to significant herd size increases (restocking) that must be taking place in many areas.

In coastal, sub-coastal and mountainous areas of Awdal and Galbeed regions (which have a different seasonal pattern than most other areas), good *Hais* rains are helping recovery of livestock affected by several seasons drought as well as offering pasture/grazing opportunities for livestock from less fortunate neighbouring areas. These rains follow the good *Karan* rains of late 2000, which were important in relieving a crisis situation at the time. The traditional elders and herders in these coastal and sub-coastal areas predict that the present *Jilaal* will be far less severe than recent ones, with the intense dry season reduced from 4–5 to 1–2 months.

The area between Zeila and Asha-Addo (about 60 Km) received good *Koxdin Hais* rains (first rains of the *Hais*), while showers occurred in the grazing area between El-gal and Laanta Morohda. The *Dirir* (Second stage) *Hais* rains fell in the Oogo ecozone (the high land intermediate to the coastal plains).

Elsewhere in Northwestern regions, particularly in Togdheer, very poor and near destitute pastoral households are in a critical situation due to the absence of adequate marketing mechanisms and livestock accreditation to allow exports. The depletion of pasture/grazing is the result of longer-term environmental degradation, a combination of poor rains and the increasing permanent settlement which needs to be addressed to prevent further undermining of livelihoods traditionally dependant on access to the wet

season grazing found in these areas. Many pastoralists from this area are reported to have moved into the dry seasons grazing areas with permanent water points like Odweine, although grazing is thought to be limited there.

In Sool areas, pastoralists seem to be coping better than most other areas given the market failure. Traditional methods of food utilisation such as camel slaughtering for household meat and fat consumption and storage are being employed. Of most concern are groups of pastoralists in the plains who failed to migrate to better grazing areas during the *Deyr*, and heavy influxes of livestock from Togdheer region where conditions are poor.

Livestock conditions and prospects for Bari region also seem relatively positive, with market rather than climatic factors being of concern for household food security.

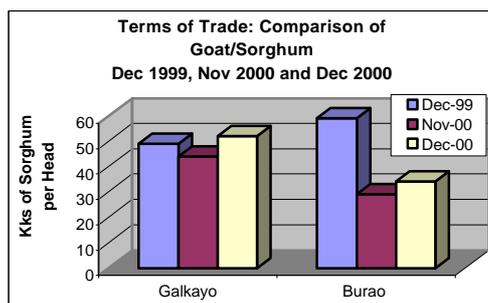
Again, climatic conditions for livestock in Nugal and Mudug have been favourable for the last two seasons at least. The major exception is Goldogob and Galkaio vicinities where rains were poor. While many herders moved their animals, those that remain will face difficulties. Insecurity is affecting livestock migration in Mudug clan border areas. Abnormal livestock movements are taking place from S-Mudug to N-Mudug and western parts of Mudug, particularly X/dheere area, where better rains were received and many boreholes are functioning. S-Mudug has a chronic water shortage problem.

Pastoralists in Juba Valley started to move to permanent water points such as the river, *dhesheks*, boreholes and hand-dug wells. This migration is earlier than normal. The potential grazing rangeland of Afmadow and Hagar districts received poor rains in the last two seasons. Pastoralists from Kenya started to cross the border due to the drought in northeastern regions of Kenya. In the Valley, milk supply is good resulting in higher than normal sales in urban markets.

**A 'FOCUS' ON THE IMPACT OF THE LIVESTOCK BAN ON THREE DIFFERENT FOOD ECONOMY ZONES (TOGDHEER agro-pastoral, NUGAL pastoral, HAWD — SOOL pastoral) WILL BE ISSUED SHORTLY.**

## MARKET PRICES AND TRADE

### TERMS OF TRADE\* \*TT

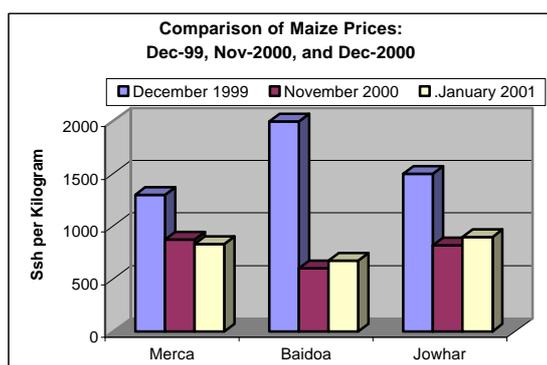


Local-goat/sorghum TT were stable compared to last month in most northern markets, the main exception being Burao. Compared to last year (for Burao), TT for 1 local quality goat reduced from about 45 kg of sorghum in December '99 to 34 kg in December 2000. In Galkayo market, probably due to low local cereal prices from nearby southern markets, TT for goat/sorghum increased marginally. TT for unskilled labor/sorghum deteriorated in most northern markets.

## EXCHANGE RATES Aug.'98—Feb.'01

The Somali shilling continues to depreciate in all reporting markets. In Mogadishu Bakaara market the shilling depreciated moderately, by three percent, from Ssh 12,600 in December to Ssh 13,000 in January 2001. Similar trends were observed in other markets using the Somali shilling. However, in Somaliland markets, the shilling remained stable at about 4600/USD, still significantly down over the last 6 months.

## LOCAL CEREAL PRICES



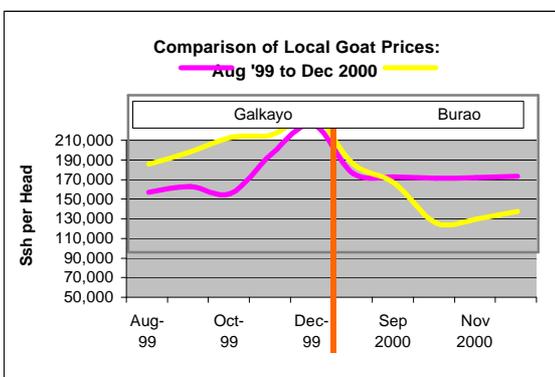
In riverine and agro-pastoral food economy groups in southern Somalia, local cereal prices, maize and sorghum, showed slight increases in January. For instance, in Merka, Qorioley and Jowhar maize prices increased by a range of 10-15%. Similar increases were noted for sorghum prices in rainfed areas. This increase may be due to lower expectations for the Deyr harvest than was thought earlier in the season.

Prices are still low however, confirmed by the fact that riverine people prefer to sell fodder than grain, far earlier in the season than is normally the case.

## IMPORTED COMMODITY PRICES

Imported commodity prices increased in most inland markets (away from seaport), as a result of difficult transport conditions caused by heavy rains in some areas in December, road blocks in Bay and Bakool due to insecurity, and increasing fuel prices. On average, prices of imported commodity rose by 10 – 20% during January in Nugal, Mudug, Bay, Bakool and Gedo regions. However, in markets close to the seaport, imported prices were stable or slightly increased, by 5 – 10%. Traders have indicated that the supply of imported food items will decrease in the months ahead due to the livestock ban. Accordingly, it is expected that prices of imported commodities will increase further.

## LIVESTOCK PRICES FOR LOCAL MARKET (N.B. there is no export market)

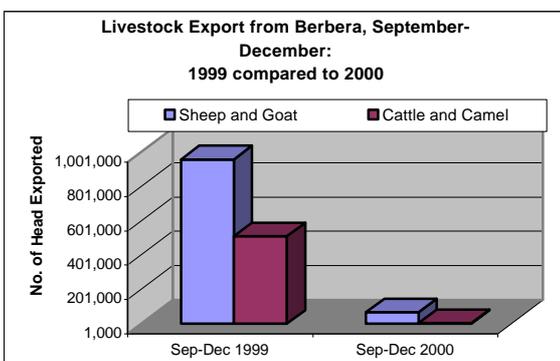


Local quality livestock prices were stable in most markets, compared to last month. Compared to last year, the picture is more mixed. As the graph indicates, local quality goats are similarly priced to last year in Galkayo but approximately 50% lower in Burao. It must be stressed that although, for example, in Galkayo, local prices are maintaining their value, this is misleading in overall volume and revenue terms (see following sub-section).

Goats for local use only represent 30 - 40% of total market volume and therefore an even smaller proportion of total market value. The export market has virtually entirely collapsed as a result of the livestock ban. The graph compares local goat prices in selected markets over the same time period Aug-Dec 1999 with Aug-Dec 2000. The far larger comparative price difference and change in Burao and Galkayo reflects the far greater size and importance of Burao as a livestock marketing centre.

This is doubly harsh on the Togdheer region as a whole, which was generally considered the most vulnerable to food insecurity prior to the ban.

## TRADE ACTIVITIES



Southern Somalia, particularly Gedo and Lower/Middle Juba regions are important catchment areas for cattle

including food items, to the Gedo and Juba regions. In normal years, trade is very active during December, especially livestock trade to the Gulf. Generally, imports increase in relation to livestock exports as the proceeds from livestock sales are used for the importation of food and non-food items. Thus, the livestock trade has a significant impact on livelihood and food security in Somalia, especially in the northeast and northwest

The table below illustrates the complete collapse of the export market. Traders normally bring back all sorts of consumer goods, including food items, to the Juba River Valley.

Livestock	Sep-Dec 1999	Sep-Dec 2000	% Change
Sheep and goats	956,772	69,508	-93
Cattle	34,491	2,986	-91
Camels	17,212	2,005	-88
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,008,475</b>	<b>74,499</b>	<b>-92</b>

Source: UNCTAD, 2000

sales to Kenya. Just before and during the Christmas (December 25) and Eid-al-Fitr (December 27) festivities, demand is high for meat in Kenya. Somali herders and traders this year took advantage of cattle prices' rises of 20 to 25% (when compared to other periods). These traders bring back all sorts of consumer goods,

## NUTRITION UPDATE

The overall welfare and nutrition status of the population in general has improved over the past six months. Improved food availability has enabled the majority of families to recover from the prolonged period of hardship that affected many regions. More favourable security has enabled some health related interventions to resume. A review of nutrition surveys and nutrition related information has however indicated a number of issues that remain of concern and demand response.

- Recent nutrition surveys continue to show malnutrition rates over 12% (Z-sc.).
- Likely contributory factors to higher than expected malnutrition rates are the long-term lack of health and education services, substandard water supply and sanitation in urban areas, poor quality of the dietary intake even when quantity is adequate and even poor standards in project implementation.
- Often, deterioration in quality and reliability of information on nutrition related issues is linked with political insecurity.

- The identification of nutrition problems and high mortality levels does not always lead to the appropriate response.
- Despite the fact that food availability has generally improved, recovery for some households is extremely slow and many have been rendered destitute.
- Incidence of illness (e.g. diarrhoea and respiratory tract infection) in surveyed populations remains high despite the presence of health services.
- Inadequate health care and education for women along with other effects of insecurity such as displacement, injury and death have no doubt affected the standard of child-care.
- Along with the increased stress associated with inadequate shelter and access to basic services, households that have been displaced within Somalia are cut off from their traditional sources of livelihood and support systems.

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## HEALTH UPDATE

With the onset of the dry season limiting availability of potable water and exacerbating poor sanitation conditions, S-Somalia's annual cholera season is expected to begin. Already in December/January, brief outbreaks claimed 7 lives (of 62 cases) around Adale town and 14 lives (of 147 cases) in Brava. Limited aid agency access to vulnerable populations in S-Somalia frequently hampers the establishment and implementation of cholera control and treatment activities. An outbreak of Kala Azar, the immuno-suppressant disease, endemic to the Horn of Africa, was first confirmed in S-Somalia in June '99. If left untreated, it proves fatal in 95% of cases. While it has not been possible to confirm the extent of the epidemic in Somalia, an additional 35 (and 1 borderline) positive cases were diagnosed during November. Although the diagnostic capacity of SACB partners expands, the number of cases diagnosed each month continues to decline. This could indicate that transmission of Kala Azar is coming under control in well-monitored areas. Despite the alert raised in Puntland following confirmation of one local case, no other cases have been diagnosed.

## FOOD AID DISTRIBUTION

### Northern Somalia:

- Low local cereal and wheat prices are maintained in the Togdheer region markets (N/Western Somalia) due to the cross-border movement of food aid distributed in Ethiopia.
- In N/Eastern Somalia, IDP's in Bossaso (economic migrants from various food economy groups) and Margago camps (mainly destitute pastoralists) have received intermittent food assistance over the last 12 months. Their food security

status is deteriorating for several reasons: lack of casual job opportunities (recession from collapsed livestock trade and port activities); less assistance from relatives/neighbours in urban centers (who are also affected by the economic downturn; irregular food distributions.

- WFP distributed 284 MT in the Northeast and 214MT in the Northwest in December (cereal, pulses, vegetable oil).

### Southern Somalia:

- In December, CARE distributed 1,370

MT in Bay, Bakool, Hiran, Lower and Middle Shabelle as food for work. About 700 MT of sorghum were distributed in Gedo (free food, 70% of the total in B/Hawa and Luuq districts). In January, no interventions took place in Gedo region due to ongoing insecurity.

- WFP distributed about 600 MT in Bay and Bakool regions in December (FFW).
- In December, UNICEF distributed 21 MT of fortified blended food (unimix) through Supplementary Feeding Centers in Bay and Bakool regions. In January, 14 MT were distributed in Bay and Gedo regions.

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

### SOOL

Despite start of dry season and livestock ban, overall food security situation for most pastoral wealth groups benefit from good livestock reproduction and production (milk and meat). Lower income levels and increasing costs of fuel, medicines and other goods are however undermining livelihoods. Also of concern is increased pressure on resources as a result of in-migration from Hudun and west Las Anod where previous rains were poor. Prices of imported cereals are high but consumers are able to switch to cheaper local cereals. Healthy livestock levels allow traditional coping methods can be employed – slaughtering a large camel and storing meat and fat for consumption in the dry season. Higher numbers of livestock may accelerate the depletion of pasture and water in some areas. Camels reported to be suffering from acute pneumonia in Nugal lowlands and cattle from an unknown disease.

### BARI

Conditions for pastoralists in general are reasonable in terms of food security as a result of good *Deyr* rains in most places, although overall household income levels are well down due to the ban. As elsewhere, good livestock productivity is assisting access to foods. Of most concern are IDPs and poor urban people living in and around Bosasso. With livestock exports and therefore port and related livestock activity collapsed, urban income opportunities are few. While many basic commodity prices have increased with the depreciating Shilling and resultant increases to transport and importation costs. Serious nutritional concerns have already been raised for IDPs in Bosasso. Intensification of wood and incense collection is taking place, and fishing is an increasingly important source of income.

### N-MUDUG AND S-NUGAL

Goldogob district and some villages around Galkayo stand alone as areas of concern for water and pasture availability, now and for the *Jilaa*, while the rest of the reporting area has had good *Deyr* rains. Goldogob borehole pumping time is already higher than normal. Migration has already taken place out of these areas, leaving mainly less mobile poorer pastoralists behind and at risk of food insecurity. The livestock ban continues seriously reducing market and income levels, affecting all areas, particularly more remote areas where terms of trade are always poor, and urban areas where income opportunities are few. The Addun area needs to be closely followed in this light given (extensively reported) high past livestock losses. As a result of the generally good rains, this season and the two previous, livestock birthing rates have been healthy increasing the availability of milk for sale and consumption, mitigating the worst effects of the ban. However, the effects of the ban are noted through low livestock prices, high imported cereal prices and intensification of coping strategies – gift and remittance seeking, charcoal production, changing eating habits to cheaper cereals. Political tensions and insecurity are interfering with necessary livestock movements.

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

**SANAG AND TOGDHEER**

Burao town and the *Hawd* of Togdheer region are hardest hit by the livestock ban, the problem has been compounded by other factors that contribute to repeated situations of food insecurity and destitution amongst pastoralists in this area. While water availability is relatively good, past overgrazing and rangeland degradation mean graze and browse is already scarce. Much out-migration has already taken place, with poor less mobile herders left behind, forced to sell breeding or pack animals, usually a last resort. Leakage of food aid from Ethiopia and intensification of frankincense and charcoal production are helping to cover lost income from livestock. Food insecurity and livelihoods are expected to deteriorate further during *Jilaal*.

**GEDO**

Pastoralists have started hand-feeding lactating stock as pasture and water availability are quickly declining, (except along the rivers) due to lack of *Deyr* rains. Poor livestock condition in Garbaharey area and parts of Elwak will need monitoring. The irrigated maize crop along the riverine areas is expected to be normal while the sorghum from rain-fed areas will range from normal to no harvest, due to poor rains and stalk-borer infestation. Lower river levels in Juba and Dawa reduced pump irrigation. The on-going harvest has improved food stocks except in Garbaharey where rainfed farmers experienced crop failure. Imported commodity prices are normal and local cereal prices remain below average. An inter-agency review of nutrition related issues was released on 2nd February by FSAU.

**JUBA VALLEY**

The riverine Bantu populations will need further monitoring (Inter-agency Assessment\*). At the onset of the *Jilaal* season, water availability for human and livestock is normal although water catchments in the rangelands have started to dry up. Pastoralists are moving towards river and *dheshek* areas; pasture and grazing are normal, browsing is good. Kenyan pastoralists moving into Somalia may cause early migration to riverine areas. Crop condition is considered poor to normal. Household cereal stocks are poor, but supply is good from Bay. Livestock prices are good due to high demand from Garissa. Agricultural employment opportunities are good. (\* Report avail. at FSAU)

**NW AND AWDAL**

Good *Hais* rains in the far NW, coastal/mountainous areas have drawn in large numbers of livestock from the Hargeisa/*Hawd*, alleviating an area of concern as well as boosting the local pastoral conditions. Concern remains for livestock in overgrazed areas (Gumburaha, Banka, Qool Caday, Tuuyo Bunyare, Qoryate, Ununuf -SE-Hargeisa) which have 30-40 days of pasture remaining. Browsing prospects for camel and goats are good, livestock are generally in good condition with most migration options remaining open. Some Nov. sorghum harvest released in Hargeisa is stabilising prices. Poor pastoralists are the most vulnerable to future livelihood failure and food insecurity.

**BAKOL**

*Deyr* rains have improved pasture/ grazing conditions and water availability in pastoral areas but were not sufficient for the agricultural zones. Good livestock production increased the purchasing power and TT of the whole region. Poor crop condition caused by stalk borer and aphids and severe moisture stress will result in failure of maize and replanted sorghum, except for a few areas. Ratoon areas look more promising due to rainfall. Prices of imported food and non-food items were higher due to road blocks and blockages at Mogadishu port, local cereal prices remain low. An outbreak of a respiratory tract infection with high mortality rate was reported in W-Tayeglow.

**BAY**

Scattered rains (20 mm in Baidoa) throughout the region during December have improved pasture and water availability. Livestock condition and milk/ghee production are reported near normal and livestock prices, especially shoats and camels, were increasing towards the end of Ramadan. Quelea-quelea birds were reported in Baidoa district damaging ratoon sorghum in milking stage. Food security at household level is considered normal. Prices for staple food are low while imported food items remain high. 1 goat fetched 4 bags of sorghum. FFW by WFP and Care for rehabilitation of farm villages improved job opportunities as well as farming activities.

**N-NUGAL**

Generally good *Deyr* rains and livestock productivity (milk/meat) has been increasing herd sizes and producing unusually high and valuable milk levels. While this is maintaining food security, the economic costs to the household of lost livestock sales are significant, affecting normal reserves of food and cash for *Jilaal*, inability to repay debts, access to credit and non-food essentials (e.g. medicines). Increased exploitation of timber for firewood and construction is a clear indicator of stress. Milk production will decline and cereal prices rise as the *Jilaal* continues pushing poorer households to the limits of their capacity to meet basic needs. *Deyr* rainfall was mixed with central areas of Gardo appearing worst off. Generally, livestock levels and conditions are good. During the *Jilaal*, declining market opportunities and TT are anticipated.

**HIRAN**

General water availability remained normal despite dry, hot weather except for light showers during the 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad of Dec. Dried up water catchments in remote areas and low river levels are considered normal for this time of the year. While there is good pasture and grazing availability for camels and goats in remote areas, overgrazing has been observed in the agro-pastoral and riverine cattle belt. Currently good livestock production is expected to deteriorate during the *Jilaal* season. The crop situation is considered very poor: 20 – 30 % (40 % in Belet-Weyne) of the established area was destroyed by moisture stress and pests. Cereal prices have remained low for the past 3 months due to the good *Gu* harvest and continuous food aid supply (FFW) and food brought in by traders originating from FFD in Ethiopia.

**MIDDLE SHABELLE**

Water availability and livestock condition remained normal despite dry conditions during Dec./Jan. River levels are decreasing. Overgrazing has been observed in areas that received rainfall. Browsing animals are better off than grazing animals and cattle moved towards riverine areas to benefit from *Deyr* crop residues. In Dec., irrigated crops (maize and sesame) were performing well while the lack of additional rainfall resulted in very low yields for the rainfed sorghum, (Jowhar, Balad). Overall, major staple foods are available at the local markets at low prices due to the good supply from the '*Gu*' harvest. Cowpea has increased due to high demand from traders, imported foods remained the same, except sugar prices (211 %). While grain stocks in most households will sustain families for some time, the riverine FEG is the most affected group due to the low prices of their produce. Clashes between farmers and livestock owners near Jowhar claimed several lives and caused displacement of farming community as both villages were totally burned. Assistance is required.

**COWPEA BELT**

Dec. inland rains have improved water /pasture availability which remained moderate throughout January. Despite the onset of *Jilaal*, waterpoints in Elder, Aden-yabal, X/Dhere and Hobyo have not been maintained. Livestock condition was reported satisfactory, rain-fed crops show moderate condition with a few insect infestations. Imported goods' prices remain high while local items are decreasing. Livestock and farm production enable adequate access to food sources for local consumption. The more vulnerable areas are the *Addun* and coastal belt where poor rains and reduced income from livestock trade is affecting normal household income.

**LOWER SHABELLE**

Deteriorating pasture condition and water availability have prompted early cattle migration to riverine areas where high animal concentration is putting pressure on pasture. The current livestock situation is considered normal despite poor pasture condition. Increased sale of animal fodder for livestock was observed (some compensation for lost livestock income). Rain-fed crops may fail in many places due to moisture stress and insect infestation, while irrigated crops (incl. sesame) were reported to be in good growing condition. The overall household food security situation is considered normal although poor wealth groups have depleted stocks. Matters of concern are a cholera outbreak in Brava (220 people died) and increased deforestation resulting from an unusually high demand for charcoal.