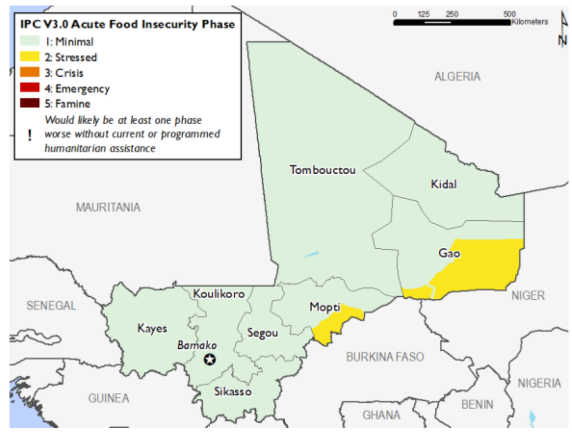
Limited household access to food in some areas due to conflict

KEY MESSAGES

- Agricultural production was 34 percent above average and is supporting generally satisfactory cereal availability in the country, despite pockets of decreased production along the river and in the Seno region in Mopti. As a result, most households in the country will experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) food insecurity between February and September 2019.
- The medium to good livestock conditions indicate a likely normal pastoral lean season beginning in March, with average livestock body conditions and average livestock product production overall. Average income from livestock sales due to satisfactory livestock body conditions and livestock products will improve the income of pastoral households.
- Households' access to cereals is generally average, owing to the availability of their own produce (although low in some areas), low to average cereal prices, and improved terms of trade for livestock/cereals. However, the decline in overall income (pastoral, non-agricultural) due to security disruption in conflict zones will negatively affect the adequate access of poor households to markets.
- The early lean season, starting in April/May instead of June due to early stock depletion, and lower incomes due to the negative impacts of insecurity, are leading households to resort to unconventional coping strategies. The resulting Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity will continue until September, with a need for humanitarian assistance from June to September for the most affected areas to avoid a worsening situation in the Niger Delta, Seno and Ménaka regions.

Current food security outcomes, February 2019



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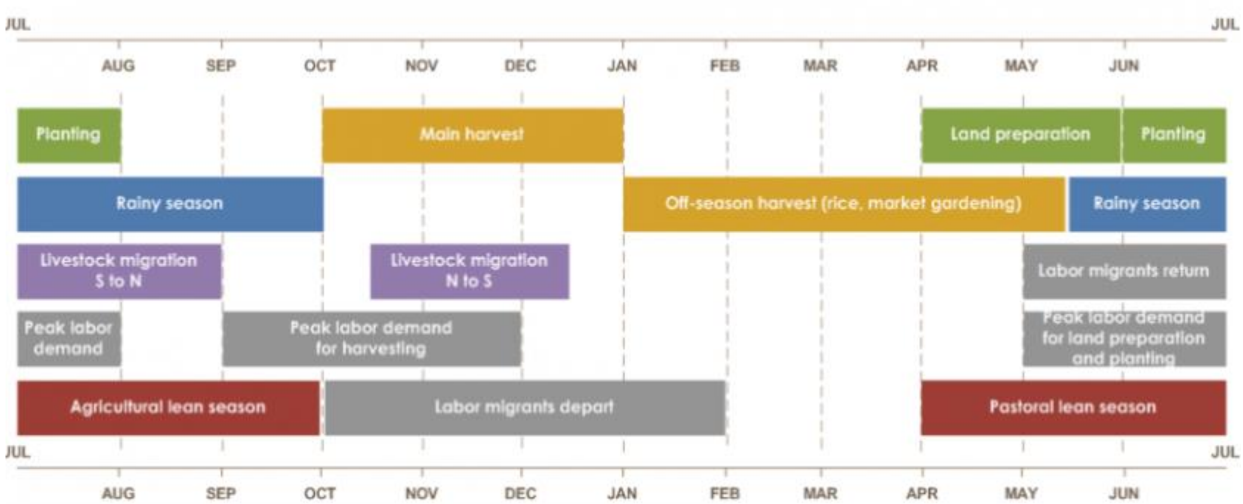
SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



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NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current situation

Agricultural production

Off-season market gardening and cereal production are progressing normally due to the good availability of water in the usual areas. The production outlook is judged to be average to above-average, due to above-average acreage farmed. The current harvests and rice planting in irrigated zones are providing income and food opportunities for poor households.

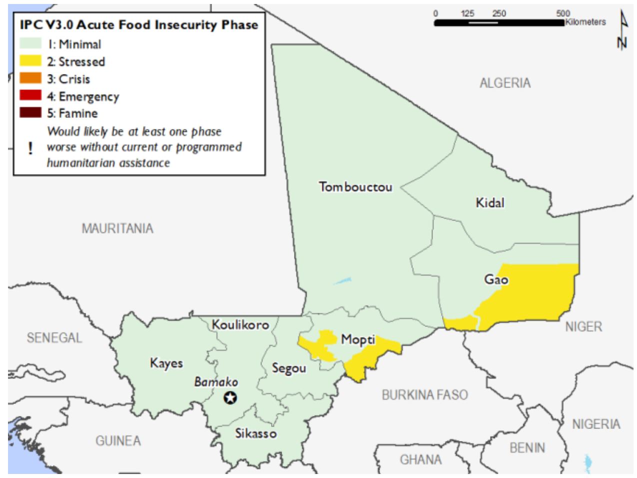
The availability of pasture is generally average in the country despite pockets of deficit, particularly in the inner Niger Delta (Ténenkou, Djenné, Youvarou, Koro and Douentza) and Timbuktu regions (Niafunké, Goundam and Timbuktu). The condition of livestock is generally satisfactory. The transhumant herds have returned for the crop residues and to the bourgou fields along the river from Mopti to Gao. However, civil insecurity continues to limit the movement of animals in central and northern parts of the country, particularly in the regions of Ségou (Niono, Macina), Mopti (Mema, Farimaké), Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. Dairy production is average to good due to good livestock farming conditions. Animal health is generally stable, and the cattle vaccination campaign launched in November continues with the support of some humanitarian partners.

The production outlook for the fishing season which started in November is average to above-average, in view of the current level of catches which is assessed to be above-average overall. Expected above-average production and incomes will improve the food supplies and purchasing power of fishing households. Fishing households are on the move to the usual fishing sites.

Supply and flow of cereals to markets

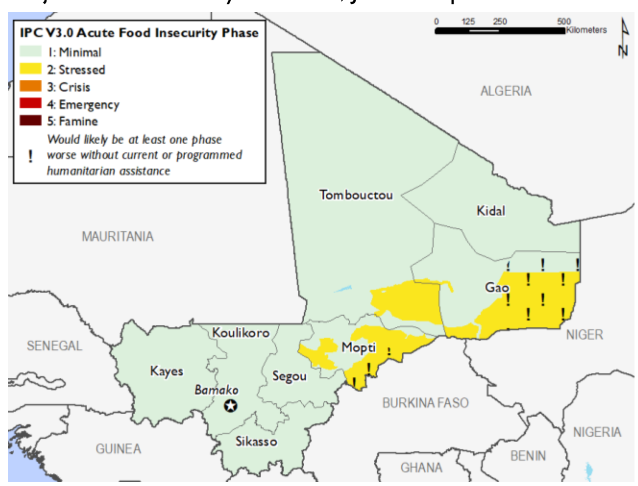
The supply of cereals to the markets is sufficient everywhere thanks to overall average to good production levels in the country. The usual increase in supply to the markets is increasingly in evidence with the arrival of new harvests on the markets. Overall, it is average to above-average. As for the Kidal market, which is usually supplied from Algeria, flows are average and continue to be affected adversely by the ongoing security disruptions. The seasonal fall in prices is evident and varied from market to market. In the regional capitals at the end of January, the price of the main cereal consumed is similar to the five-year average in Sikasso, Mopti and Koulikoro (-2 percent), down in Ségou by 4 percent and in Kayes by 32 percent, and up in Timbuktu by 6 percent, in Gao by 9 percent and in Kidal by 17 percent.

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2019



Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2019



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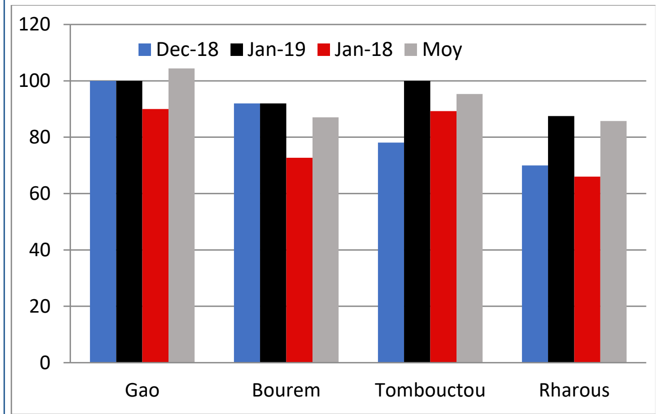
Livestock markets are increasingly buoyant as a result of the return of transhumant herds and the supply needs of livestock farmers during this period of lower cereal prices. Livestock supply is generally average due to satisfactory livestock farming conditions which are not encouraging higher than average sales. Livestock prices are average to above-average in the southern agricultural markets, but similar to or below-average in the Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu regions for large ruminants due to lower demand, which is reducing farming income. The price of goats, which are the animals most commonly sold by poor households, is 4 percent higher than the five-year average in Gao, 11 percent higher in Timbuktu, 12 percent higher in Mopti, 21 percent higher in Nioro and 14 percent lower in Rharous.

Accessibility
Average to above-average availability of own produce and products from in-kind remuneration for harvest work are allowing the majority of households' access to food without major difficulties in the production areas. The terms of trade for goats/millet are similar to slightly above-average in markets in pastoral areas, except in Gao where a decline of 4 percent is observed (Figure 1). The average to slightly above-average fall in prices for the main staple foods and the improved terms of trade for livestock/cereals are supporting average access to food for agropastoral households.

Figure 1. Terms of trade for millet/goats (kg/animal)



Source: *FEWS NET*

Food consumption
Food consumption has improved thanks to the availability of new harvests of cereals and pulses, market garden products and animal products (milk, cheese, meat). According to the September 2018 National Food Security and Nutrition Survey (ENSAN), 20.5 percent of the country had poor or borderline food consumption scores; this is expected to see the usual improvement and to be close to the February average of around 13.5 percent. As for food diversity, it is highest for most households in this period, thanks to improved household access to diversified food. The hunger index is at the average level for the period - 8 percent moderate to severe hunger.

Population movements
The usual departures of able workers to the country's urban centers and neighboring countries in search of additional income are under way as normal. In the central areas, insecurity has contributed to an above-average increase in these movements to more secure areas. Ongoing intercommunity security incidents continue to lead to population displacements, particularly in the regions of Gao, Ménaka, Timbuktu and the border strip with Burkina Faso. As of February 2019, some 120,298 displaced persons had been recorded, of whom 56,452 were in the Mopti region alone, where population arrivals from Burkina Faso were also reported. Returns of refugees continue to be recorded throughout the country. Food and non-food support is provided to displaced persons and returnees by the government and humanitarian partners.

Security situation
The security situation continues to be marked by the continuation of security incidents that are negatively affecting the socio-economic environment in the northern and central regions of the country; reducing employment opportunities and incomes relative to the average for poor households. Loss of property and looting associated with these security incidents are damaging livelihoods for households in the areas concerned. The movement challenges associated with these security incidents make it difficult to properly implement humanitarian support for poor households in difficulty, increasing their vulnerability to food insecurity and limiting the rebuilding of livelihoods which are vital to meeting their needs.

Assumptions

The most likely food security scenario from February through September 2019 is based on the following underlying assumptions regarding the trends in nationwide conditions:

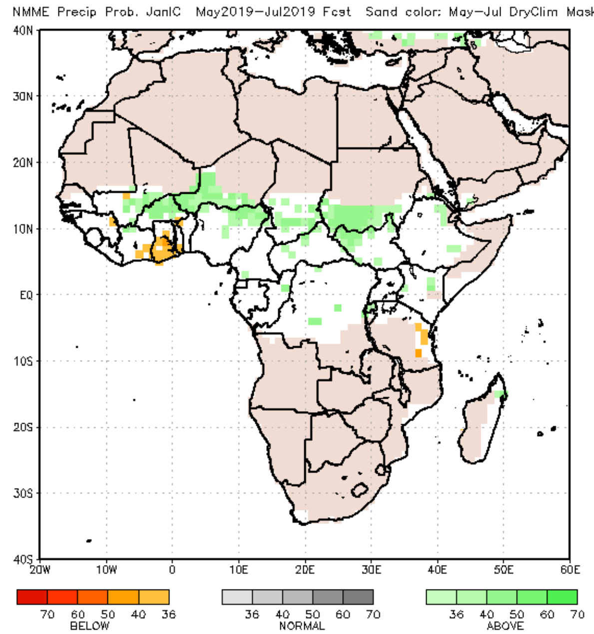
Agricultural and pastoral production

Rainfall: According to the latest IRI and NMME climate forecasts in January 2019, seasonal forecasts do not show any major anomalies up until August 2019. Cumulative rainfall in August is expected to be average to above-average. Based on these observations, according to FEWS NET, the rainy season will begin on time, in June in the Sudanian and Sahelian area of the country and in July in the northern areas of the country.

Water levels: The current high-water level on rivers is higher than last year's level over the same period and the multiannual average at most stations. Water levels are expected to rise again from June to July 2019 due to the onset of the rains, continuing until September-October. The average to above-average precipitation expected will result in average levels during the 2019 season.

Off-season crops: Off-season crops are being actively established, especially off-season market garden crops and rice, in the usual areas. The expected output will be above-average due to good water availability in ponds, lakes and rivers, supporting an increase in acreage. The current average to above-average harvests for market garden crops, and those expected for off-season rice in June-July and wheat in April, will improve food availability for farming households.

Figure 2. Precipitation forecast from May to July 2019



Source: *NOAA/NMME*

Agricultural production: The timely launch of equipment distribution and hydro-agricultural developments, due to the normal onset of rains and continued support through agricultural inputs from the government and partners (seed, fertilizer), means that overall production can be expected to be average to above-average. The increase in acreage, in conjunction with the conditions mentioned above, indicates average to above-average harvests in the country from October 2019. However, the unstable security situation will continue to affect agricultural activities in areas of community conflict, which will lead to localized declines in production, particularly in the north and center of the country.

Agropastoral lean season: The agricultural lean season will be normal for the majority of the country's population, thanks to average to good food availability and food prices that support average household access to food. It will run as usual from June to September for farmers, due to the usual depletion of stocks and the average seasonal increase in cereal prices. However, it will be one to two months early (April/May) for poor households in the Niger Delta, the river band and some conflict areas in Mopti and Gao, due to the early depletion of their stocks in February instead of March/April and the overall decline in income.

Pastoral lean season/animal production: The average to above-average availability of pastures and water points throughout the country's various areas of concentration indicates a normal pastoral lean season from April to June. The usual replenishment of pasture and water points due to onset of the rains in June/July will restart milk production and recovery in the condition of cattle to an average level. However, the recurrence of community conflicts in the border strip with Niger in the Menaka region and with Burkina Faso in the Mopti region will limit adequate access to certain routes; this may affect the proper feeding of herds and adversely affect income and the availability of animal products for pastoral households.

Livestock movements and animal production: The usual descent of herds for crop residues and to permanent water points from February will continue until March. In June/July, the replenishment of livestock conditions (pasture, water points) by the rains will restart the departure of herds towards areas of usual winter concentration. However, disruptions to the usual movement of herds will be observed in areas of conflict, particularly in the Mopti and Menaka regions. In the Western Sahel, an early descent by Mauritanian livestock is expected due to a sharp decline in the availability of fodder, leading to an early deterioration in livestock conditions in the area.

Fishing: The catch prospects for the current fishing season, which will continue until March due to the decline in river levels, are average to above-average for the various fisheries in the country. The lifting of protected areas and collective fisheries from March to April will help to raise catch levels for fishing households. The seasonal decline in catches will be observed from July due to water levels rising again. Increasing fish catches during the fishing season will generate higher than average incomes and good availability of fish to meet household food needs.

Other livelihood activities

Migration and population movements: The usual departure from September of able workers from agricultural areas to the country's urban centers and to other countries will continue as normal until March. The gold-panning sites officially opened in October will be the preferred destinations for many migrants in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro and Sikasso. The average in-kind and cash resources sent from February to May, and/or brought back by migrant workers who will return from

May/June, will help to relieve households during the agricultural lean season from June to September. In areas where agricultural production has been poor, the early and widespread departures of migrant workers will contribute to an above-average increase in resources brought back, due to the longer than usual stay and the higher numbers departing.

Agricultural and non-agricultural labor: Non-agricultural labor and small trade activities between February and May, and those linked to the February to June agricultural season particularly in off-season cereal (rice and wheat) areas, will continue as normal in the country. The average income from such activities will enable poor households that depend on them to improve their purchasing power. However, in areas in the northern regions and in the Mopti Delta where agricultural production has been poor, the decline in employment opportunities (construction, small trades, etc.) due to the security situation will generate lower than average incomes. The onset of the new agricultural season from June/July will increase average employment and food opportunities for poor households in agricultural areas.

Markets and prices

Cereal prices: The seasonal downward trend in prices observed in the production areas will continue until the end of February due to the good availability of cereals, which is reducing demand on the markets. Seasonal increase in demand for consumption and replenishment of community and institutional stocks will increase the level of demand, which will be lower than average; this will lead to stability or even a slight increase from April as usual but less marked than in a typical year. The price trend for the main cereal (millet), which is lower or slightly higher than the average on the main markets, will continue until September.

Livestock prices: The above-average price trend for livestock is expected to continue due to overall average to good livestock conditions in the country and to domestic and external demand, which will remain average overall. The seasonal fall in prices in April due to the usual deterioration in the condition of livestock in the pastoral lean season will be observed until June, particularly in areas of insecurity where access to certain markets is disrupted. Despite the fall in prices, they will remain average to above-average. Despite their improvement, the terms of trade for livestock/cereal will remain close to the average in pastoral areas.

Other key factors

Institutional procurement: Institutional procurement, through national security stock replenishment of approximately 15,000 tons of millet/sorghum, and procurement by WFP and other humanitarian agencies in 2019 under the National Response Plan, will generally be lower than average due to the decline in the number of recipients of aid in the country and the tendency to favor cash transfers and resilience building over food distribution.

Security: The unstable security situation observed is likely to continue in the usual areas, particularly in the country's border strip with Burkina Faso and Niger, where the recurrence of community conflict continues to disrupt the movement of people and goods and cause displacement of people and loss of life. The same applies to the Timbuktu and Gao regions. The implementation of joint patrols involving all warring parties is a calming measure that will help to improve the security situation and minimize its impact on the socio-economic life of the areas concerned.

Humanitarian action: The national response plan under preparation includes food assistance and resilience building for approximately 450,000 people identified by the harmonized framework workshop. Support in terms of agricultural inputs for the new agricultural year, and support for farmers in the form of animal feed and veterinary care in areas with a pasture deficit, is under way and/or planned. Support for the reintegration of returnees and repatriates will continue throughout the outlook period. These resilience-building programs will limit the use of negative coping strategies by beneficiary populations.

Nutrition: The usual decline in food availability for poor households from March-April will lead to a change in diet that negatively affects the nutritional status of households. The prevalence of acute malnutrition, usually decreasing in the post-harvest period, will experience its usual deterioration from April, reaching a peak during the lean season in July-August close to the median for the period, which is 10.7 percent [9.8-11.6]. It will be relatively high in areas of poor production and conflict where access difficulties will affect household nutrition. Improving and scaling up programs to detect and manage malnutrition, particularly in areas affected by poor production and conflict, will help to reduce deterioration in the nutritional situation.

Most likely food security outcomes

Overall average to above-average agricultural production in the country, and near-average to slightly above-average prices of foodstuffs, are giving the majority of households' average access to food. Their own produce (although low in some places), in-kind and cash remuneration for harvesting, as well as average income from traditional farm and non-farm labor, are enabling the majority of poor households to access food without too much difficulty. The rate of 20.5 percent having a poor or borderline food consumption score in September 2018 is improving compared to the lean season and is close to the average level. The same applies to the use of unconventional coping strategies, which has decreased due to the good availability of crops and the decline in cereal prices. As a result, most households in the country will experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) food insecurity between February and September 2019.

However, the early depletion of stocks for some households in the Niger Delta, in the Mopti region, flood-prone areas along the river from Timbuktu to Gao, and in areas of community conflict, is leading them to make greater use of markets for food supplies in an unstable socio-economic environment that is not conducive to households achieving average incomes. The atypical use of migration, increased labor and higher-than-average livestock sales will place poor households in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity from March to June 2019. The same will apply to flood victims in other regions who face difficulties both in meeting food needs and in restoring their deteriorated livelihoods. The increase in prices during the lean season, reducing market access for poor households, and the intensification of unconventional food-coping strategies, will contribute to a worsening in food consumption and nutritional status. The increase in the number of households with poor or borderline food consumption will be well above the median rate of 15 percent for the period. In the absence of humanitarian assistance, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity will deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) for poor households, especially in areas of community conflict in the border strip with Burkina Faso and Niger, from June to September 2019. The national rate of global acute malnutrition (GAM) is classified as Serious in the July 2018 Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey, although stagnating from 2017. This prevalence rate structurally above the Serious threshold will normally deteriorate from March/April as a result of food strategies, deteriorating hygiene conditions and the prevalence of respiratory and parasitic diseases from June to September.

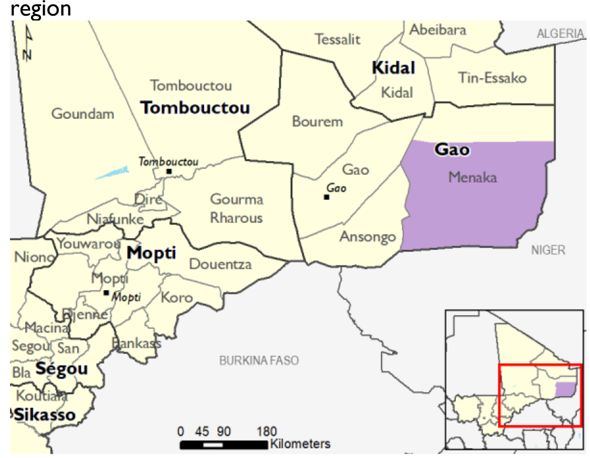
AREAS OF CONCERN

Livelihood Zones 2 and 4: Northern Livestock Farming, Menaka region

Current situation

Pastoral conditions: General conditions for livestock farming are satisfactory, due to average availability of pastures and average to above-average fill level of water points overall. The usual movement of animals to the usual water points continues, however with disruptions due to community conflicts in the area. The physical condition of livestock and the level of animal production are generally satisfactory. Animal health is relatively stable during this period.

Figure 3. Map of Livelihood Zones 2 and 4 in Menaka region



Source: *FEWS NET*

Markets: Food supply to markets from Gao, Niger and Algeria (pasta) is satisfactory. The price of millet in early February was 9 percent higher than the previous month. It is 14 percent higher than the five-year average which is negatively affecting household access to food. The terms of trade for goats/millet in early February 2019 are virtually stable compared to the previous month and the five-year average, as a result of the 11 percent increase in goat prices compared to the average.

Sources of income: Economic activities in the area continue to be affected by the aftershock of the security crisis, which is reducing employment opportunities and overall household income. Money transfers by migrants from the interior and neighboring countries (Niger, Algeria), which are one of the important sources of income in the area, are continuing and allowing households to access the market to meet their food and non-food needs.

Security: The security situation is marked by ongoing community conflicts, which are disrupting the free movement of people and goods, and causing unusual population movements toward more secure areas, damage to property and loss of life. At the end of January, 12,543 displaced persons were recorded according to data from the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) alert monitoring system. These displaced persons find themselves in a difficult food situation in the absence of humanitarian support.

Humanitarian assistance: Displaced households are being provided with food aid through the distribution of free rations, and non-food aid through hygiene kits and healthcare, both by the government and by humanitarian partners. In addition, the program for detection and treatment of malnutrition is continuing.

Assumptions

The most likely food security scenario in the 'Northern livestock farming' area from February to September 2019 is based on the following specific assumptions:

- **Farming incomes/Animal production:** The usual deterioration in the condition of animals from March to June will reduce the level of animal production (milk, cheese, butter) as usual, although current farming conditions do not indicate a difficult lean season. High demand at Tabaski (Eid al Adha) in July/August will improve livestock incomes but they will remain below-average due to the decline in herd size for many poor households and the fall in livestock prices relative to the average. The decline in farming income and animal production is affecting the purchasing power and food supplies of farming households.
- **Cereal prices:** Cereal prices will remain above-average from February to September 2019 due to difficulties in physical access to markets which will negatively affect market supply throughout the period. Support through the National Response Plan and sales of government interventions will help to reduce the scale of the increase, which will be 5 to 20 percent above-average between February and September.
- **Terms of trade:** Decreasing farming income due to lower livestock prices and livestock assets for poor households, and disruption of access to markets, in conjunction with rising cereal prices, will affect the terms of trade for livestock/cereals from March to June. Terms of trade for goats/cereal will be below-average from February to September, despite an improvement between July and September as a result of the revival of livestock farming conditions and rising prices due to demand at Tabaski.
- **Security:** The security situation will be marked by continued robberies on supply routes and intercommunity clashes. The resulting displacement of persons, looting, deaths and problems in the circulation of people and property will exacerbate the deterioration in already pressurized livelihoods.

Most likely food security outcomes

The average to good availability of food on markets, animal production (milk, butter) and foraged food, and farming and laboring income are giving households average access to food during this period where cereal prices are declining to an average level. However, the civil insecurity which is disrupting economic activities and population displacements is adversely affecting the livelihoods of affected households, who are then resorting to unconventional coping strategies to access food. As a result, they are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security.

From March to June, the usual decline in animal production, the deterioration in terms of trade for livestock/cereal as a result of lower farming incomes, and the decline in overall income as a result of above-average cereal prices, will negatively affect poor households' access to food. Poor farming households under pressure will engage in unusually high livestock sales, increased laboring activities and migration. The use of crisis and emergency strategies will be higher than the median of 24 percent for the past four years. The low availability or absence of dairy products for human consumption due to unusual conflict-related livestock and population movements, as well as reduced food volumes and quality due to falling household incomes, will push the poor or borderline food consumption score above the 13 percent median for February, and the acute malnutrition rate above the WHO Serious threshold (10 percent).

From July to September, improved farming conditions will restore milk production and the condition of livestock, which will improve household food consumption. Rising livestock prices linked to demand for Ramadan and Tabaski will not benefit poor households with few or no animals to sell. The 13.5 percent prevalence of acute malnutrition in the Menaka region recorded in the July 2018 SMART survey will remain above the critical threshold and will deteriorate from the median. Thus poor households with limited livestock assets and dependent on migrant remittances will only be able to meet their food needs with external support, this will especially apply to displaced households. They will therefore face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity. To prevent the situation changing to Crisis (IPC Phase 3), humanitarian assistance will be needed from June to September.

Livelihood Zone 9: Central Sorghum and Millet in Bankass and Koro

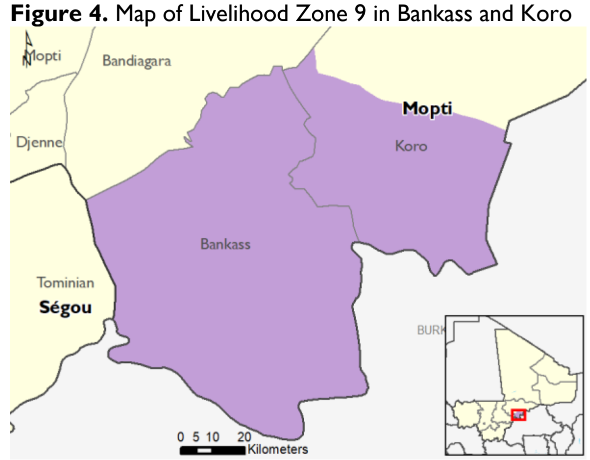
These are the communes in Bankass and Koro affected by community conflicts, which have experienced significant declines in agricultural production as a result of these conflicts.

Current situation

As a result of access to new, although low, harvests, the poor or borderline consumption score for 28.8 percent of households in the zone in September 2018 is expected to improve and be close to the average for the zone, which is structurally in Stressed to Crisis phase. The livelihood protection gap of 1 percent for 2 to 5 percent of households in the zone in September 2018 is increasing household vulnerability in the zone. According to the September 2018 ENSAN, approximately 7 to 15 percent of households used crisis or emergency strategies, compared to 4 percent in the pre-conflict years before 2015.

Economic activities are suffering from the aftermath of the insecurity created by the community conflict, which continues to disrupt the free movement of people and goods. These security incidents severely reduced the performance of off-season crops despite good opportunities for this.

Figure 4. Map of Livelihood Zone 9 in Bankass and Koro



Source: *FEWS NET*

Despite disruptions to access, markets are being supplied and are allowing households in need to obtain food. Cereal prices are below-average, by 6 percent in Koro and 12 percent in Bankass. These price levels are helping households to access the markets. Goat prices, however, are about 15 percent higher in Koro and 22 percent higher in Bankass than the five-year average. Higher livestock prices and lower millet prices are not benefiting the poor because of disruptions through lower incomes and deteriorated livelihoods, especially for displaced households for whom access to food is difficult outside the humanitarian support provided by the government and humanitarian agencies.

Recurring insecurity in the area is leading households to resort to unconventional strategies to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on their subsistence. For example, there are unusually high departures of migrant workers and populations toward more secure areas in search of resources and selling of goods to reduce losses. By the end of January, some 56,452 displaced persons were registered in the Mopti area, particularly in Bankass (20,014) and Koro (17,733), according to the Commission on Population Movement (CPM).

The program for screening and treatment of malnutrition cases by the state and humanitarian partners (UNICEF, WFP) continues throughout the zone. This, in addition to relatively average access to food, is helping to limit deterioration of the nutritional situation in the zone.

Assumptions

The most likely food security scenario in the conflict zone in Bankass and Koro from February to September 2019 is based on the following specific assumptions:

- **Security:** The security situation is still marked by continuing attacks and robberies in the zone, despite the efforts of the government, its partners and community leaders. The situation will remain disrupted throughout the outlook period, although there may be a decline in intensity as a result of current negotiations.
- **Economic activities:** Disruption of economic activities due to community conflicts will significantly reduce local work opportunities for poor households. Difficulties in the movement of people and goods, as well as the resulting

displacements of persons, will prevent normal resumption of activities; this will reduce household income in the areas concerned to below-average. Destruction of property and looting are not conducive to replenishment.

- **Cereal prices:** The downward trend in cereal prices relative to the average in the main markets of the zone will continue despite security disruptions. However, the security-related market access difficulties that will be observed during the period, and the higher than average demand in these zones, will contribute to price increases from March to September. Millet prices will remain near-average to slightly above-average. The availability of the first harvests at the end of September will start the seasonal fall in prices.

Most likely food security outcomes

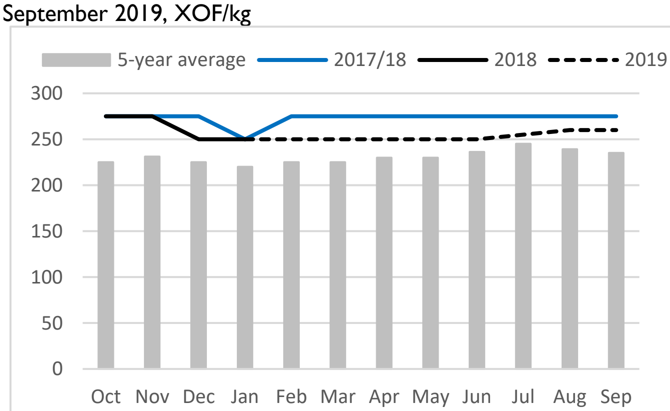
The availability of own harvests, although low, and of produce received in exchange in harvest areas, in addition to below-average prices, are allowing households average access to food without too much difficulty. The poor or borderline consumption score for 28.8 percent of households in livelihood zone 9 in September 2018 is expected to improve and be close to the average for the zone, which is structurally in Stressed to Crisis phase. The moderate to severe hunger index, which was about 2 percent according to the September 2018 ENSAN for the zone, is expected to continue or deteriorate at an early stage in the areas most affected by insecurity, which has led to a sharp deterioration in livelihoods. Households experiencing a deterioration in livelihoods linked to reduction in agricultural and non-agricultural income, looting of property and lack of employment opportunities will be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security from February to May.

Stock depletion one to two months or more, earlier than in a normal year is leading poor households without work opportunities to use unconventional coping strategies to meet their food needs. Poor households will resort to atypical widespread departure of workers, reduction in non-food expenditure, reduction in meal volumes to prolong stockpiles, use of cheaper food, and borrowing. The consumption score will therefore experience a more marked seasonal deterioration than usual. Due to food-coping strategies and poor households' difficulty in accessing food, the prevalence of malnutrition will be worse than the 10.8 percent GAM and 2.6 percent severe acute malnutrition (SAM) recorded in the December 2018 Rapid SMART in Bankass. Poor households lacking livelihood protection as of September 2018 will be unable to adequately meet their food and non-food needs without external support. As a result, they will be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity from May to September, with humanitarian support required to avoid transition to Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Other areas of concern in the country

Significant declines in production and security disruptions negatively affecting the socio-economic environment will increase food insecurity more than usual in localized areas of the Niger Delta river band in Mopti (Djenné and Mopti), Timbuktu (Gourma Rharous, Diré), and Gao (Bourem, Gao, Ansongo). Early stock depletion in these areas, leading to longer than usual market dependency, means a need for financial resources beyond the capacity of poor households, who are experiencing lower incomes because of poor local employment opportunities. Rising food prices, which will remain around 15 to 20 percent above-average, will reduce the ability of poor households to access food. Early and atypical use will be made of finding work, migration, borrowing and using the cheapest foods to meet their food needs, particularly during the months of May to September. These poor households, which currently have access to their own produce and income in cash and in-kind from agricultural labor, although lower than average, will be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity from February to September 2019. This will also apply to flood-affected households across the country. Very poor households (less than the 20 percent proportion required to categorize the whole zone) will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from June to September 2019 due to severe deterioration of their livelihoods and increased use of negative coping strategies.

Figure 5. Estimated price of millet in Gao from February to September 2019, XOF/kg



Source: *FEWS NET*

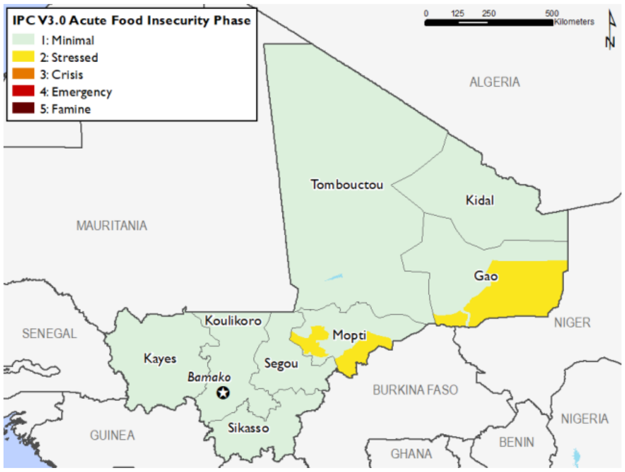
EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table 1. Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
National	Delayed and/or inadequate onset of rains in July-August	A delay in the onset of the rains will prolong the pastoral lean season more than usual, which could increase the risk of higher mortality due to deterioration in animal condition and as a result income. Similarly, the resulting delay in planting crops will adversely affect the expected cereal production in September.
National	Damage by crop pests from April to September	Significant damage by grain-eating birds and army worms to off-season crops from February to June, and to rain-fed crops from June to September, may reduce the availability of cereals in agricultural zones and lead to higher prices for cereals. Higher prices would reduce poor households' access to food.
Northern and central Mali	Heightened market disruptions due to ongoing insecurity	Heightened insecurity would further impact economic recovery in affected areas, negatively impacting household incomes and livelihoods market supply in the area and increasing the vulnerability of poor households to food insecurity.
Northern Mali (zones 2, 3, 4), the Niger Delta (zone 6) and the Sahel band (zone 13)	Significant bush fire damage to pasture from April to May	Bush fires often cause severe damage to pastures from February to May. This would lead to abnormal deterioration of pastures and would result in difficulties in feeding livestock. The resulting decline in the physical condition and production of animals, and perhaps even their death, would have a negative impact on the livelihoods of agropastoral households.
National	Flooding due to heavy rains or marked rise in river levels	The damage to crops and capital equipment in affected areas from July to September will negatively affect household livelihoods and reduce households' ability to adequately meet their food needs.
Northern and central regions	Humanitarian food support for households in food difficulties	Increased support covering at least 50 percent of the needs of the majority of poor households in anomalous areas will improve the food situation, which will help to safeguard fragile livelihoods that are under pressure.

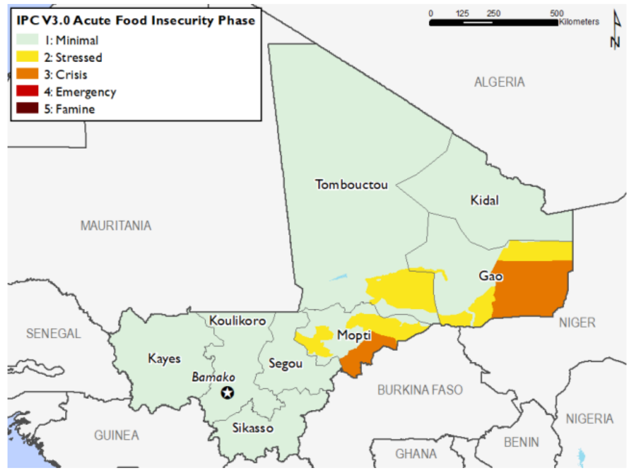
FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES ASSUMING NO HUMANITARIAN FOOD ASSISTANCE IN THE PROJECTION PERIOD*

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2019



Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2019



Source: *FEWS NET*

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

**The current IPC v3.0 protocols require that a second set of projection maps be created to indicate the most likely food security outcomes in the absence of the expected effects of humanitarian food aid. This protocol is being revised and could change.*

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes over the next eight months, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to develop scenarios for food security outcomes. FEWS NET usually outlines the most likely scenario. Learn more here.