

Somalia: Food Security Emergency

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) issues periodic emergency alerts when a significant food security crisis is occurring, where portions of the population are now, or will soon become, extremely food insecure and face imminent famine.

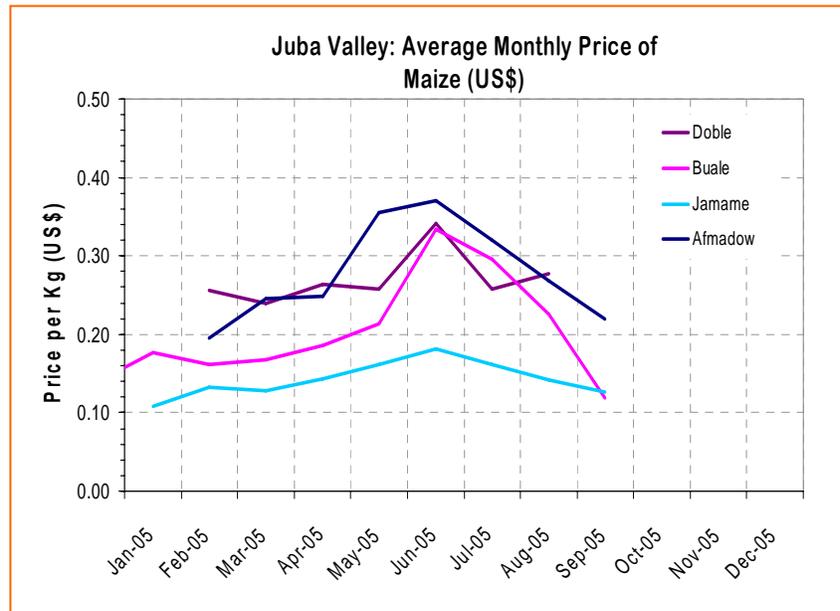
Decision makers should give the highest priority to responding to the situations highlighted by this **Emergency** alert.

Issued: October 19, 2005 in collaboration with FAO/Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU)

Recovery process is on track among the drought affected pastoral population in the Northeast

Three seasons of above normal rainfall coupled with a sustained humanitarian assistance by aid agencies have helped the recovery process for the drought affected Sool Plateau and Nugaal Valley pastoral livelihood zones. As a result, a significant number of the destitute pastoral households in the main towns and villages were reintegrated into pastoral communities. However, continued livelihood support is needed over the coming seasons to aid the full recovery of the pastoral economy.

The overall food security situation in the North/Northeast where pastoralism is the main livelihood is normal. Recent baseline work and a field assessment by FSAU/FAO and FEWS NET in these areas confirmed that water and pasture availability is above normal. As a result, livestock condition, productivity and value have increased significantly. Kidding rates for shoats (sheep and goats) have been above normal, with normal survival rates for kids. Moreover, camel calving rates are expected to increase over the coming months, resulting in increased availability of milk for households. A recent nutrition survey among returnees and IDPs around Hargeisa indicated a substantial improvement in the nutrition situation. Global malnutrition was found to be 7.6 percent, which is below levels previously seen in similar populations (*FSAU Nutrition Update, October 2005*).



In central regions, resource based conflict, road blocks and general insecurity disturbed market activities and pushed prices of staple food to high levels. As a result, terms of trade between milk and cereal decreased by 25% compared to a normal year. The insecurity also limited dry season migration options among the pastoral communities due to sustained hostility between different clans within Galgaduud Region.

In the south, localized conflict, insecurity and tensions intensified in Bay and Bakool regions and parts of Juba Valley. The conflict displaced civilian populations in Qansadhere (Bay Region) and Wajid districts (Bakool), disrupted the internal trade, worsened food security and jeopardized humanitarian response. Moreover, the recurrent and ongoing conflicts have the potential to disrupt *Deyr* 2005 farming activities.

Even though key underlying problems of chronic vulnerability still remain, the food security situation among the riverine communities in Juba Valley is expected to improve in the short term, due to good off-season harvests of maize, cowpea and sesame. In most of the key markets in Juba Valley, the price of maize dropped in real terms (see the figure above). In Bu'aale, for instance, the price of a 50 kg bag of maize dropped from 150,000 Sh. So in July to 80,000 Sh. So in late September/early October. This is will likely increase poor households' access to cheap cereals. Even though the prospect of the standing off-season crops is good, the risk of *Deyr* floods (November) is remains as most of the riverbanks destroyed by the *Gu* floods are still open. With possibility of *Deyr* flooding in Juba and Shabeele valleys, effective contingency planning and increased humanitarian interventions are required