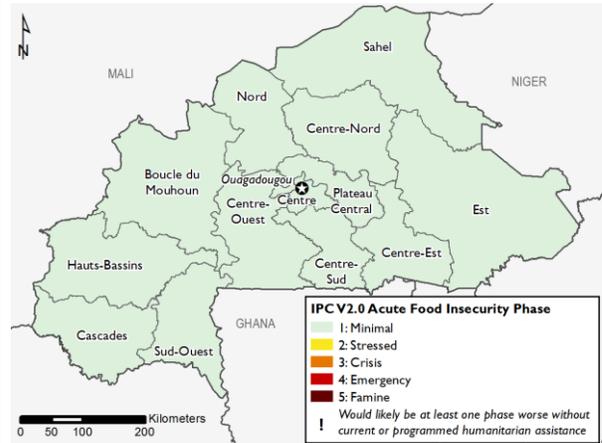


A generally average harvest forecast for cereal crops, with localized poorer harvests

KEY MESSAGES

- Rain fed cereal production for the 2017-2018 crop year marred by numerous dry spells and fall armyworm infestations should generally be in line with the average, though there will be very severe production deficits in some areas. On the other hand, forecasts for cash crop production show above-average harvests with the supposedly larger areas planted in cash crops as a result of the uncertainty at the beginning of the season leading to the switch-over of certain cereal-growing areas to cash crop production.
- On the whole, the levels of watering holes are more than adequate, suggesting good water availability for livestock and good prospects for off-season activities (market gardening activities in particular). Moreover, the purchase price of gold in gold mining areas is up slightly from last year and close to the five-year average, which could help bolster the incomes of prospectors during the usual gold mining period (between November and May).

Current food security outcomes, October 2017

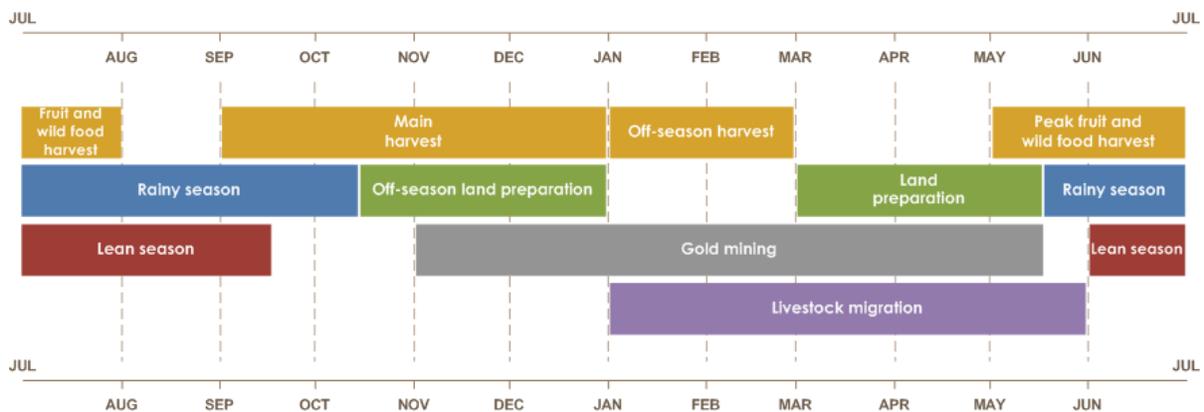


Source: FEWS NET

The classification system used by FEWS NET is IPC-compliant. An IPC-compliant analysis follows major IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus reached by national partners with respect to the food security situation.

- Staple food prices are still above the five-year average as the harvest season gets underway. However, most food supplies are from household crop production and the average to above-average levels of household income produced by the sale of cash crops should help provide access to a normal diet. This would help keep acute food insecurity at Minimal (IPC Phase 1) levels through next May, except in the case of very poor and poor households in livelihood zone 8 in the northern part of the country facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security conditions.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current situation

The rainy season, which got off to an early start in all parts of the country, is ending, with cumulative rainfall totals generally at or above the ten-year average. However, the season was marred by a poor temporal distribution of rainfall, with frequent, long dry spells (lasting more than two weeks) in many areas.

In addition, fall armyworm infestations caused major damage to crops in all stages of their growth cycle, particularly maize crops (affecting more than 40,000 hectares of crops). This damage prompted the replanting or replacement of crops and reduced crop yields in certain areas (particularly in the Cascades, Southwestern, and Central-Western regions).

Once again, grain-eating birds damaged and hastened the harvesting of millet crops in the usual areas (Soum, Oudalan, Séno, Sourou, and Tapoa provinces). However, in spite of the security problems in the northern part of the country impeding treatment efforts, the damage to this year’s crops was successfully contained and, thus, is expected to be less extensive compared with the average for the last three years.

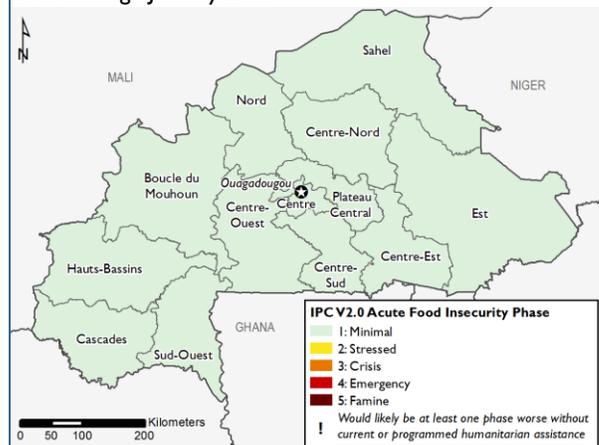
There are near-average levels of new pasture growth, but the limited physical access to certain normal grazing areas (Nassoumbou, Déou, Koutougou, and Diguel) could lead to large concentrations of livestock and overgrazing problems in certain auspicious areas and trigger earlier than usual migration by livestock herds to more secure areas

Fresh crops (cowpeas, maize, and peanuts) are starting to appear on local markets. However, staple food prices are still higher than usual. This is due to the small carry-over market inventories prompting traders to hold onto existing stocks until the end of the harvest. Thus, consumer prices across the country are above the five-year average (by six percent in the case of maize, 18 percent in the case of millet, and 12 percent in the case of sorghum). In the Sahelian region in particular, the price of millet, the main dietary staple, is reportedly above the five-year average (by 16 percent in Djibo, 13 percent in Dori, 20 percent in Sebba, percent in Gorom-Gorom). Prices in major crop-producing areas are also reportedly outstripping the five-year average (by nine percent in the case of maize, 16 percent in the case of millet, and 11 percent in the case of sorghum).

Major livestock markets in pastoral areas (Gorom-Gorom, Dori, and Djibo in the Sahelian region) are reporting a low demand for animals compared with supplies, particularly for male sheep and bulls. In fact, sales rates for male sheep range from 64 percent in Gorom-Gorom to 78 percent in Djibo. Sales rates for bulls vary from 55 percent in Gorom-Gorom to 81 percent in Djibo. This depressed demand is due in part to the reduction in exports to Niger and Nigeria. In addition, security concerns are discouraging certain potential buyers from frequenting certain markets. In general, prices are on par with or less than 17 percent above the five-year average.

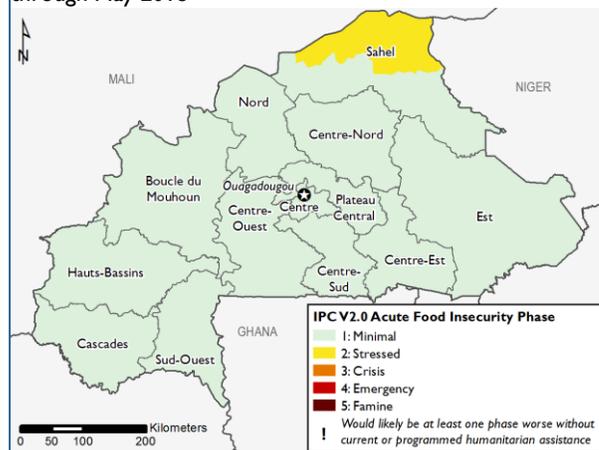
Thus, with the high level of staple cereal prices, terms of trade for male goats/millet in major pastoral areas in the northern part of the country (on the Gorom-Gorom and Dori markets) are detrimental to pastoralists and poorer than usual (down by 38 and 11 points, respectively, in Gorom-Gorom and Dori).

Most likely estimated food security outcomes for October 2017 through January 2018



Source: FEWS NET

Most likely estimated food security outcomes for February through May 2018



Source: FEWS NET

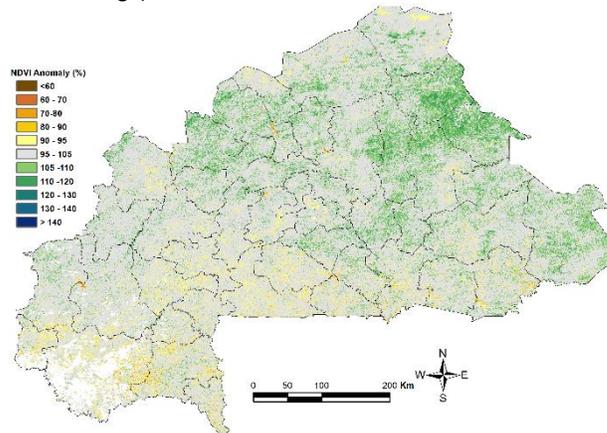
The classification system used by FEWS NET is IPC-compliant. An IPC-compliant analysis follows major IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus reached by national partners with respect to the food security situation.

Assumptions

The most likely food security scenario for October 2017 through May 2018 is based on the following general assumptions:

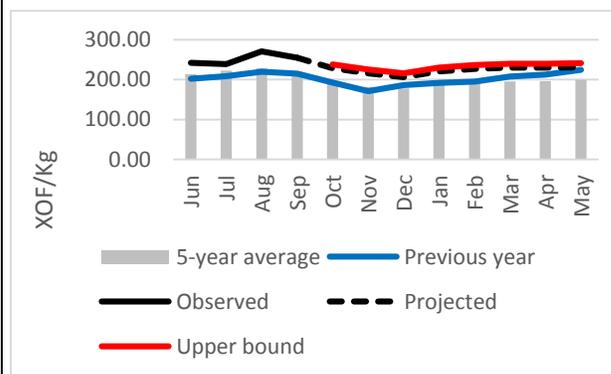
- Average levels of cereal production:** Production figures for cereal crops will be close to the five-year average due to the problems affecting these crops throughout the growing season (erratic rainfall in many areas, fall armyworm infestations, etc.)
- Above-average volume of cash crop production:** Production numbers for cash crops should exceed the five-year average with the larger areas planted in these crops and the normal plant health conditions.
- Near-normal levels of dry season crop production:** There will be a normal growing season for dry season crops, with average water availability and the usual support and assistance from the government and its partners. This will help put crop yields for these farmers close to the five-year average.
- Typical grazing and watering conditions for livestock:** The levels of animal watering holes and average pasture availability will maintain normal grazing and watering conditions for livestock for the entire outlook period. As usual, seasonal migration by livestock herds will pick up as of January-February and the lean season will begin in March and run through the month of May. However, the threat of attacks by jihadists in the Sahelian region and surrounding areas will limit access to certain normal grazing areas.
- Average to above-average cereal prices:** Normal demand and average market supplies will keep trends in staple cereal prices between October and March in line with the seasonal average. However, the premature depletion of household food stocks in deficit areas and normal domestic and foreign institutional demand generally beginning in the second quarter of the year are expected to produce a higher than usual demand by the month of April.
- Average levels of farm and nonfarm income:** A larger than average supply of cash crops, particularly cowpeas and peanuts, will keep their prices close to the five-year average. In addition, with the average volume of crop production and normal grazing and watering conditions for livestock, households will not be forced to resort to atypical sales of animals, which could keep livestock prices in line with the five-year average throughout the outlook period. This could help keep terms of trade in favor of pastoralists. In addition, with gold prices close to the five-year average, as usual, short-term seasonal migration to gold mining areas will serve as a source of income.
- Stable nutritional situation:** With the current GAM rate at 9.3 percent (according to the SMART survey of October 2017), the nutritional situation in general and, in particular, that of children under the age of five could stabilize at a GAM rate close to the 9.7 percent SMART survey average for 2009-2016, with households enjoying normal levels of food consumption and a normal supply of fruits and nuts (mangos, cashews, and citrus fruits) and non-woody forest products (locust beans, baobab fruits, and jujubes or red dates).

Figure 1: Map of NDVI anomalies (compared with the 2006 – 2015 average)



Source: USGS/FEWS NET

Figure 2 : Projected millet prices on the Djibo market, in XOF/kg



Source: FEWS NET, based on SIM/SONAGESS data

Most likely food security outcomes

In general, poor households will have access to a normal diet based mainly on household crop production. They will also be able to generate average levels of income without damaging their livelihoods. However, poor households in the far northern reaches of the country (in livelihood zone 8) are expected to continue to face high cereal prices, particularly as of the month of April when their supplies of home-grown crops are normally depleted. The widespread security problems in this part of the country are limiting access to certain grazing areas, which is also expected to heighten market demand for animal feed and contribute to the erosion in household purchasing power. Thus, poor households in this area will be facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of acute food insecurity between April and May. As usual, poor households elsewhere in the country will continue to live on supplies of home-grown crops and will experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity for the entire outlook period.

EVENTS THAT COULD CHANGE THE OUTLOOK**Table 1:** Possible events in the next eight months that could change the outlook

Area	Event	Impact on food security conditions
National	Implementation and extension of the subsidized cereal sales program	The opening of government-subsidized shops selling cereal crops in different provinces could help bring down market prices to near-average levels.
	An atypical demand for cereal crops within the sub-region	Atypical cereal exports could help drive prices above the five-year average and, thus, erode terms of trade, particularly in areas with structural deficits.
Livelihood zones 7 and 8	Deterioration in the security situation in the northern part of the country	A deterioration in security conditions, particularly in the Sahelian region (livelihood zones 8 and 7), could create shortages of staple food crops on local markets, prevent traders from frequenting livestock markets, and curtail humanitarian operations in these areas. As a result, there could be an erosion in terms of trade (for livestock/cereals) and, thus, issues with household food access once household supplies of home-grown crops are depleted, which is generally the case by the month of April

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes for the upcoming eight-month period, FEWS NET develops a set of basic 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 predicting food security outcomes. Typically, FEWS NET bases its projections on the most likely scenario. Learn more [here](#).