![FEWS NET — Famine Early Warning Systems Network]

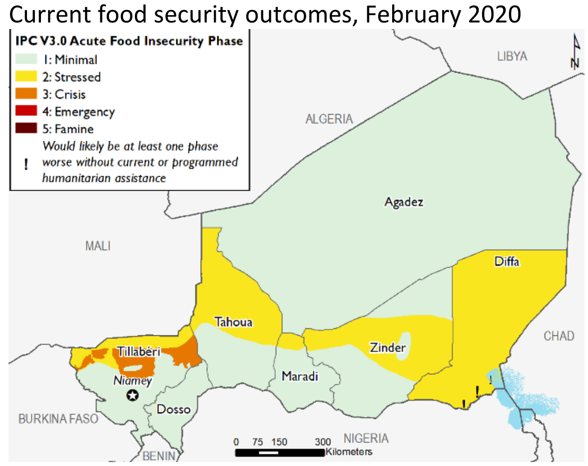
NIGER Food Security Outlook — February to September 2020

Food insecurity remains in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to the worsening security situation

KEY MESSAGES

- Population displacement has increased as a result of significant deterioration in the security situation since the beginning of the year. Newly internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the regions of Tillabéri, Tahoua, Diffa and Maradi were estimated at 11,000 from January to February 2020.
- The effects of localized droughts and flooding have led to agricultural deficits in some areas. However, good production of cash crops (groundnuts, sesame and cowpea) and ongoing horticultural production are providing average income and food opportunities, increasing access to food for the majority of agricultural and agropastoral households.
- Markets are functioning with a sufficient supply of products for the low demand, which consists mainly of purchases from local consumers and livestock farmers. Prices have slightly increased, especially for staple foods (maize and sorghum), because of disruption to flows following the closure of the border and border insecurity.

Current food security outcomes, February 2020

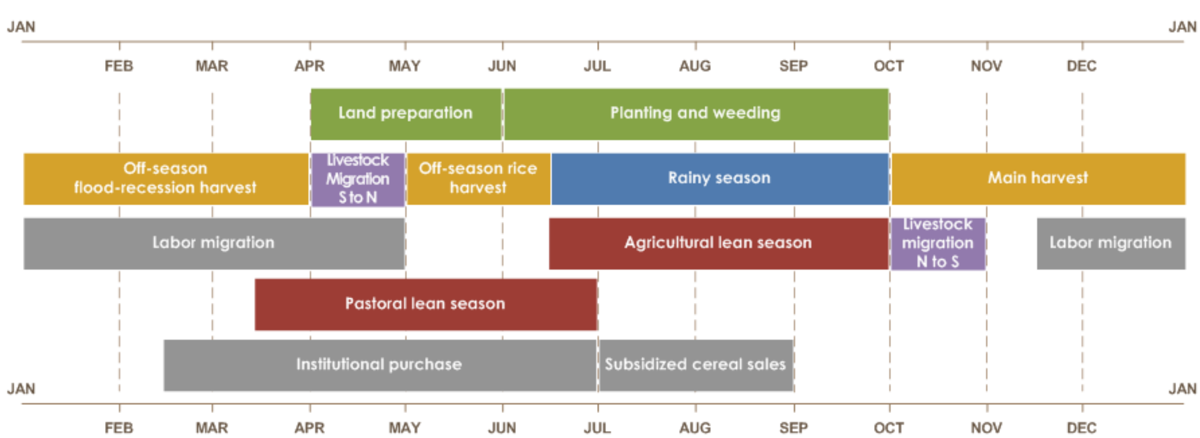


Source: *FEWS NET*

This map represents current acute food insecurity results relevant to emergency decision-making. It does not reflect chronic food insecurity. Learn more here.

- In several pastoral areas, pasture availability is limited to small pasture areas that are insufficient to feed livestock. The cost of fodder, in addition to household food costs, will result in more sales of animals than usual. For poor households, food consumption needs will be covered but at the expense of strong pressure on livelihoods, and the area will move progressively into Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity in March, until at least July 2020.
- Acute food insecurity is Minimal (IPC Phase 1) in most of the country, although higher levels are observed in the northern areas of the Tillabéri region – which is in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) – and in the Diffa region, where food assistance is keeping households in Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!).

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



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NATIONAL OVERVIEW

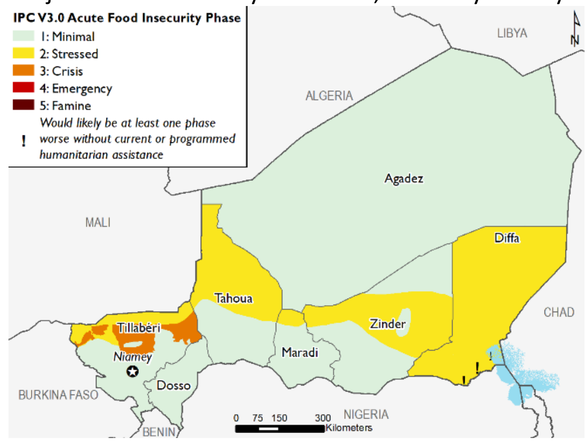
Current situation

Insecurity is still the most important risk factor at the start of 2020. There has been an unprecedented increase in security incidents in the regions of Tillabéri, Diffa, Tahoua and Maradi. This has increased population movements within the country and across the borders with Nigeria, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Population flows observed in January 2020 of more than 11,000 displaced persons were recorded, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The largest displacement flows were recorded in the region of Tillabéri, where new IDPs in January and February 2020 represented 6 out of 11 displaced persons. These displaced persons, in addition to an estimated 250,000 previously displaced people, are being accommodated mostly by host families in the regions of Tillabéri, Maradi and Tahoua.

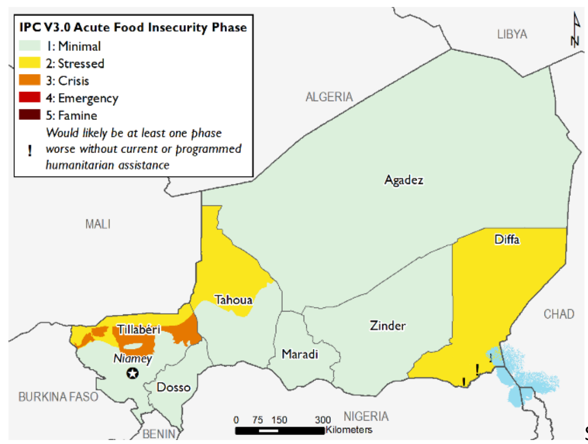
Supply of cereals is meeting demand on the markets, except in the regions of Tillabéri, Diffa and Tahoua, where supply is very low due to insecurity and conflict limiting flows or leading to the closure of several markets. Supply on the markets comprises both cereals and cash crops, mostly from local production, except for maize and sorghum, where 80 to 100 percent of market supply is from countries such as Nigeria for sorghum and Benin and Burkina Faso for maize. Local demand is average, due to stocks held by farmers and replenishment of stocks by livestock-farming households. Commercial demand is also low, owing to uncertainty about the demand trend, especially in relation to the ongoing deterioration of the security situation in the Lake Chad sub-region and Liptako Gourma. Cereal prices are above seasonal averages and even compared with last year's prices, especially for imported products, which are taking very long routes due to insecurity and the closure of the Nigerian border. This is creating very high transaction costs, reflected in consumer prices, which are contributing to higher market prices.

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2020



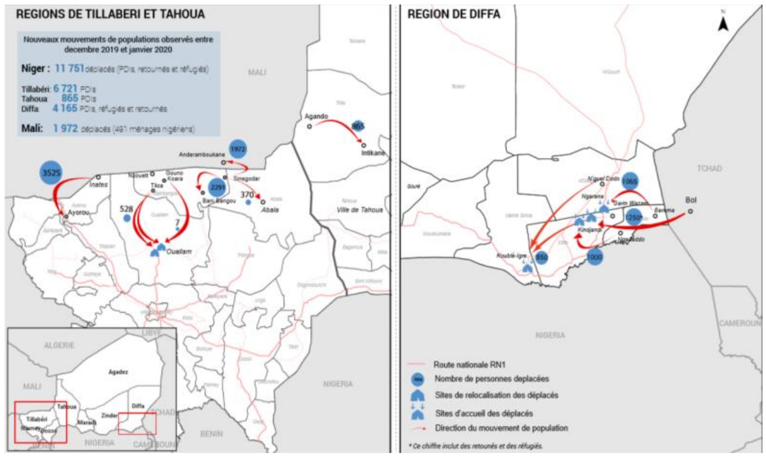
Source: *FEWS NET*

This map represents current acute food insecurity results relevant to emergency decision-making. It does not reflect chronic food insecurity. Learn more [here](#).

In cattle markets, there has been a significant increase in animals presented for sale, as a result of the early descent into agricultural and agropastoral areas by transhumant herders, who are strategically selling off livestock due to the fodder deficit. The increase in sales is also due to supply by transhumant herders from other countries, in particular Chad and Cameroon, to markets in the regions of Zinder and Maradi, which are considered more secure. However, supply has significantly decreased on markets in the regions of Tillabéri and Diffa, due to security concerns. There is average demand for animals on the markets because, in addition to local demand for consumption, there is the usual export demand despite the closure of the Nigerian border. These favourable conditions for demand, and the good physical condition of livestock, are helping to keep prices higher than the previous year and the five-year average.

Food availability is mostly comprised of cereals produced during the past agricultural season and producers' carryover stocks. There is average availability in relation to human consumption needs, except in some areas where production has been destroyed by floods, and in other areas where area planted was reduced due to insecurity reducing access to crop fields. The harvest is complemented by produce from the growing season for irrigated vegetable crops, which is benefiting from good water availability and support from partners. These horticultural crops are at the stage of maturity/harvest in all production areas, and production is expected to be average. They are providing opportunity to diversify food consumption and are sources of income for poor households selling their agricultural labor.

Figure 1: Recent population movements in regions of Tillabéri, Tahoua and Diffa



Source: *OCHA*

Cash crop production in 2019/2020 is estimated to be good and is allowing producers to earn farming income on food products, especially as cash crop exports to Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo are following the normal trend, except for cowpeas, where exports to Nigeria have continued to decline since the fall in value of the naira. Sale prices for cowpeas are below their seasonal average, especially in the high-production areas of Zinder and Maradi. Sesame and groundnut production are good, due to increases in the areas planted and use of improved seeds, and producers are securing good prices on the markets thanks to strong export demand.

With the fodder deficit estimated at more than 11 million tons of dry matter, there is very low availability of pasture for animals in pastoral areas. However, purchases of food supplements are helping to maintain the physical condition of animals and their market value. Nevertheless, animals remaining in the pastoral area cannot find enough pasture and their maintenance is putting an additional financial burden on household expenditure.

By relying on their own horticultural and cereal production, agricultural and agropastoral households generally have sufficient access to food and incomes. Food and income sources are also generally supporting a nutritional situation in line with the seasonal trend. However, in conflict zones where health facilities are destroyed or inaccessible, the reduction in agricultural production and the loss of livelihoods may lead to a deterioration in the nutritional status of children under 5 years of age.

Therefore, most households in agricultural and agropastoral areas are in Minimal (IPC Phase 1) food insecurity. This is thanks to food resources, from cereal and horticultural production, which are enabling access to adequate food to meet their consumption needs without resorting to atypical strategies. Good cash crop production is providing income from the sale of these crops, which is covering essential non-food needs.

Nomadic livestock households remaining in the pastoral area are Stressed (IPC Phase 2), as rising consumer prices and the deteriorating condition of livestock are requiring farmers to sell more animals than usual to cover essential food and non-food expenditure.

In the southern part of the Maradi region, a minority of households, consisting of refugees and poor host households, are meeting their food needs with food assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP) and nongovernmental organizations under the rapid response mechanisms in place.

In the Diffa region, most households in agricultural and agropastoral areas are Stressed (IPC Phase 2), due to poor agricultural and pastoral production as a result of localized rainfall deficits and floods. However, affected populations are benefiting from ongoing government social safety net measures. In areas where livelihoods depend on peppers and rice in Komadougou, and on fishing and flood recession crops around Lake Chad, food insecurity is generally Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!). This is due to conflict and flooding, which have destroyed food and income sources for households. Despite receiving humanitarian food assistance to cover their needs, households are unable to cover non-food expenditures.

Food insecurity remains in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in the agropastoral livelihood areas of the Tillabéri region, due to insecurity which is preventing people from engaging in normal livelihood activities and from accessing income and food. In the pastoral part of this region, food insecurity is Stressed (IPC Phase 2). Populations have lost a large part of their livelihoods in the form of livestock capital, as a result of attacks, looting and excessive sales to meet food needs.

Assumptions

The most likely food security scenario from February to September 2020 is based on the following underlying assumptions regarding trends in nationwide conditions.

Agropastoral season: The agricultural and pastoral season should start at the usual time, with normal cumulative rainfall but with local surpluses that could cause flooding with loss of livelihoods.

Food availability: The availability of staple foods in households and markets is expected to develop in line with the normal seasonal trend, with adequate access and supply between February and April due to food and financial contributions from horticultural production, and a normal decline coming up to the start of the lean season in June.

Income sources: Cash crops (cowpeas, groundnuts, sesame, tiger nuts and Bambara nuts), the production of which is estimated to be average overall, will yield monetary income in February/March. Horticultural products will contribute to household resources between February and April 2020. Poor households will also receive average to above-average incomes from harvest work on flood recession and off-season crops, which will be abundant until April 2020 thanks to the good level of groundwater recharge supported by heavy rains. Small-scale trade, handicrafts and the sale of timber and straw will provide other sources of income. However, these earnings will be lower than average, given the number of people and the higher supply, as most displaced persons and those facing agricultural and fodder deficits will be adopting these survival strategies.

Migration: Due to the persistent security crises in Nigeria, Mali and Libya, migration departures will decrease or will be short term. Remittances will remain low and below the seasonal average.

Pastoral season: There is a significant deficit in fodder production, compounded by three to four years of below-average production and availability of fodder. Overall, this will lead to the lean season starting early, from March, and lasting longer than usual, resulting in a deterioration in the condition of livestock and their market value, as well as a decrease in milk production. Consequently, incomes in pastoral areas will decrease. To cover food and non-food expenditure, faced with the decline in animal prices and the rise in consumer prices, households will sell more animals than usual and this will reduce the size of herds between April and July. However, support is expected from the Government in the form of moderate sale prices for fodder, to slightly reduce the effects of the fodder deficit in April, May and June.

Institutional purchases: Institutional purchases will most likely be largely made up of procurements for humanitarian assistance to address growing needs for interventions due to security crises and forced displacement of populations. This significant procurement may also sustain price increases, although within seasonal norms, between February and March/April 2020 and limit access for poor households in need.

Humanitarian actions: Humanitarian partners and the Government developed response plans for February to September 2020, targeting 1,444,905 people outside the lean season and 1,932,539 people during the lean season. Response measures include free distribution of food, money and non-food items, as well as addressing acute malnutrition through prevention activities and blanket supplementary feeding programs. These responses will cover populations estimated to be in need, but security measures and terrorist attacks are resulting in restrictions to movement, making it difficult to access populations in conflict-affected areas.

Market demand: This will comprise demand from traders and institutions, households with deficits and livestock farmers in February/March and April/May. Local demand and demand from traders will be at an average level, due to good production levels discouraging traders from stockpiling more than usual. However, there will be above-average demand from institutions, due to growing needs of humanitarian assistance in several parts of the country.

Product flows: Cross-border flows (Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire) will continue normally and will supply Niger's local markets. However, flows from Nigeria, Mali and Burkina Faso will see a downward trend, due to the security crises and tensions associated with the upcoming elections. Outward flows for cash crops and animals will also be reduced, due to the constraints observed in Nigeria. Internal flows from areas of good agricultural production in Maradi and Zinder will be disrupted, and few will reach remote markets, especially those in areas of security crises.

Agricultural prices: Cereal prices in most markets from February to May 2020 are likely to maintain their stable trend in relation to the five-year average and the previous year, but with some rising trends caused by additional demand from institutions. From June to September 2020, following the depletion of stocks of local producers, demand will rise and lead to an increase in prices, although within seasonal norms, except in markets located in areas of security crises. Prices for cash crops will show a downward trend, due to low export demand caused by the closure of the border with Nigeria and persistent border insecurity.

Livestock markets and prices: There will be an average number of animals for sale, due to export demand and local demand for fattening in preparation for Eid al-Adha celebrations in July/August 2020. Because of this relative improvement in demand and in the naira exchange rate, as well as a drop in supply following the departure of transhumant livestock farmers, livestock prices will be average in March, April and May 2020. However, they will fall in June/July when supply increases in exchange for cereal purchases, in the lead up to the ascent back to pastoral areas.

Impacts of depreciation of the naira and closure of the border with Nigeria: The relative improvement in the exchange rate between naira and XOF will not significantly improve the transfer of staple foods to local markets in Niger over the outlook period. This is due to the impact of the conflict and the closure of the border, which will reduce the export of livestock and cash crops to Nigeria and lead to higher prices for products imported into Niger.

Security situation and population movements: Security incidents will continue, and the unconventional movement of animals due to the fodder deficit will increase intercommunity conflicts between herders and agricultural farmers more than usual in the regions of Tillabéri, Diffa, Tahoua and Maradi. This will also exacerbate population movements, with far greater numbers involved than at present.

Most likely food security outcomes

From February to May 2020, households in agricultural and agropastoral areas, in most livelihood areas, will be in Minimal (IPC Phase 1) food insecurity. Food availability and access to food will be covered by residual cereal stocks and horticultural products, which are typical livelihood strategies and will allow for normal non-food expenditure.

In the pastoral zone, food insecurity will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), due to poor households having difficulty accessing food as their purchasing power will be affected by the fall in fodder production and the decline in livestock – the main source of income for the population.

In conflict-affected areas, food insecurity will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in the Diffa region, with the exception of livelihood zones focused on peppers, fishing and flood recession crops, where it will be Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) due to planned and current humanitarian food assistance. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) will continue in the agropastoral area of Tillabéri affected by the conflict, which is disrupting livelihoods and causing a food consumption deficit among displaced households and poor host households, who are seeing pressure from displaced populations on their food resources and not receiving food aid due to the conflict limiting their access to humanitarian actors.

In the southern part of the Maradi region, host households, representing only about 3 percent of the population of the host areas for Nigerian refugees, will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), due to a consumption deficit resulting from sharing food rations. Planned and current food assistance is covering food needs and enabling non-food expenditure.

Increases in acute malnutrition admissions to care centers are expected from March to September 2020, especially in areas affected by conflict and intercommunity tensions, where high prevalence of global acute malnutrition may be observed due to the destruction of health facilities, combined with poor health coverage, food deficits and water, hygiene and sanitation problems during the rainy season.

Between June and September, small percentages of poor households in all agricultural and agropastoral zones will become Stressed (IPC Phase 2) due to depletion of stocks and the effects of floods on livelihoods, which will reduce their access to food, the price of which will be high.

Livestock farming households will move into Minimal (IPC Phase 1) food insecurity in August/September 2020, due to the start of the new season and to improvements in the condition of livestock and in terms of trade, which will improve their ability to cover food needs and meet all essential expenditure.

Most livelihood zones in the Diffa region will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), but in livelihood zones focused on peppers, fishing and flood recession crops, Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) food insecurity will only be maintained though planned humanitarian food assistance.

In the agropastoral area of the Tillabéri region, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity will persist due to the absence of cereal stocks for self-consumption and the loss of income for accessing food. The security situation will prevent access to food assistance to reduce the food deficit faced by poor and displaced households. Households in the pastoral band of this region will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) as a result of looting and theft which has damaged their livelihoods, but income from above-average sales of animals will enable them to access the necessary food to meet their food consumption needs.

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

Area	Events	Impact on food security outcomes
National	Increasing conflict and border insecurity	Significant reductions in the flow of consumer, cash and livestock products and a decrease in migration and remittances would increase the number of people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3)
	Rainfall deficit	Decrease in agricultural production and supply Decrease in fodder production with impact on incomes of livestock farming households

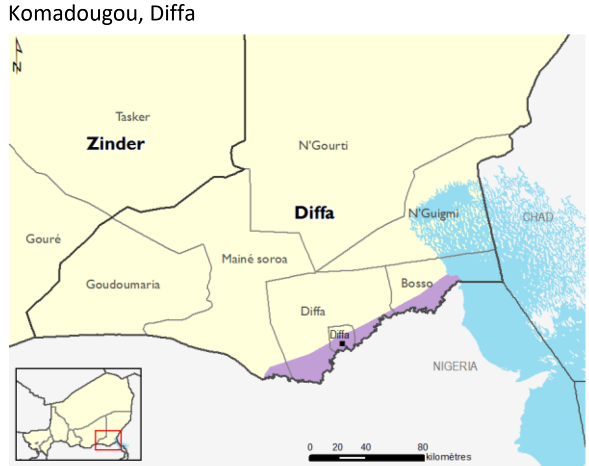
AREAS OF CONCERN

Irrigated peppers of Komadougou, Diffa

Current situation

The main feature of this livelihood zone is the irrigated production of red peppers – known as "red gold" because of their high market value – irrigated production of rice and onions and rainfed cultivation of millet, sorghum and maize. The area sits on the north bank of the Komadougou River, which runs approximately 160 kilometers along the southeast border with Nigeria and eventually flows into Lake Chad. The Nigerian cross-border markets mainly add value to peppers, which they sell dried, although they are also sold to the west, in the rest of Niger. Flood-recession crops are also grown in this zone. Rice is the second most irrigated crop, followed by onions, and there is also some market gardening (tomatoes, cabbages, okra, chilies and other vegetables). Fishing is a minor seasonal activity.

Figure 2: Reference map: Pepper-growing area in Komadougou, Diffa



Source: *FEWS NET*

Threats and vulnerabilities: The security situation remains a concern in the area, causing perpetual population movements.

- The persistence of civil insecurity, with incursions by Boko Haram and kidnappings with demand for ransom, continues to cause significant population movements in the Lake Chad basin. Approximately 259,000 persons are recorded, including 109,500 IDPs, 119,500 Nigerian refugees and 30,000 returnees.
- Exceptionally large floods have caused loss of livelihoods and displacement of populations.

Floods in October/November 2019 engulfed producers' fields, especially rice, onion and pepper crops, and resulted in a loss of agricultural production. The area flooded is estimated at 6,299 hectares, including 2,230 hectares of rice crops, 1,719 hectares of onions and 2,349 hectares of peppers. Thus, production of the area's main crops (peppers, rice and onions) fell sharply, with an average of 3-5 bags per producer compared with 80-100 bags last year.

The Regional Civil Protection Service has recorded approximately 25,000 people affected by the floods, who are internally displaced.

Figure 3: Food assistance from January to December 2019

Target	Households reached	Recipients	Food assistance (tons)	Cash assistance (XOF)	Coverage rate
398,760	**51,189**	**358,323**	**26,806**	**5,044,572,725**	**90%**

Source: *OCHA/Diffa Food Security Cluster*

Food availability: In a typical year, agricultural production covers 40 percent of the energy needs of the population. According to provisional results published by the Directorate of Agricultural Statistics, the Diffa region recorded net cereal production estimated at 37,909 tons, while requirements are estimated at 151,636 tons. Significantly below average production of millet and rice has reduced food availability. Current production estimates anticipate harvests to be sufficient to cover only 25 percent of needs, i.e. three out of the 12 months of the year. However, there is sufficient replenishment of markets thanks to imports from other countries, including Benin and Nigeria. Supply levels are nonetheless judged to be lower than last year and below average due to the low rate of demand resulting from carryover stocks and a slowdown in trade with Nigeria following the closure of the border and the Boko Haram conflict. Product prices are stable compared with last year and with the average.

The pastoral conditions in the region are below-average, due to many areas of bare grazing land observed in most of the pastoral zone and the locust invasion on available grazing land. In addition, access to available pasture remains difficult in the reserves along the Komadougou River and in the Lake Chad basin owing to insecurity and security measures.

Access to food: Market purchases and food assistance are the main sources of food for households. Market availability is sufficient and millet purchase prices are favourable compared with the five-year average, but household purchasing power is low given the decrease in income from sales of peppers and onions. The reduced production of peppers, due to flooding and insecurity preventing access to sites, has also resulted in a significant reduction in in-kind payments for labor provided by poor households.

Alternative household income sources mainly comprise coal and firewood sales for 43 percent of households and day labor for 48 percent of households, according to rapid assessments conducted in January 2020. However, strong competition is causing prices to decline, thus lowering income sales revenues. For example, a bundle of timber is now XOF 1,500, whereas it was XOF 2,000-3,000 last year.
Humanitarian assistance is making a significant contribution to vulnerable households' access to food. This assistance, estimated at 26,806 tons of food and over XOF 5 billion, has enabled an average coverage of 90 percent of needs.

Nutrition situation: The results of the nutrition survey conducted in October 2019 indicate a prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) of 10.9 percent, compared with 13.4 percent in 2018. In terms of cases of malnutrition, 7,920 severe cases and 11,086 moderate cases were recorded in 2019, compared with 22,290 severe cases and 38,791 moderate cases in 2018.

Current food security outcomes

Households in pepper-growing areas are experiencing Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) food insecurity, as a result of the insecurity and floods causing a significant reduction in agricultural production of rice and peppers, which are normally the main sources of food and income. Rice and millet harvests covered only two to three months of consumption, i.e. from October to December 2019, and stagnant flood waters combined with restricted access to crop sites are causing huge losses of livelihood. Households continue to rely heavily on humanitarian food assistance to cover their food needs.

Assumptions

In addition to the above assumptions, the most likely food security scenario in this area between February and September 2020 is based on the following assumptions.

Food availability: Availability of food is expected to diminish sharply from March/April, and food stocks will run out between May and August, due to the effects of the floods on the production of rice, which is a major source of food in the area.
Average water availability will support the development of existing crops, but the insecurity caused by Boko Haram will negatively affect areas available for cultivation and off-season production will be below average.

Income sources: The significant reduction in the production of peppers, as a result of the insecurity and flooding, will result in a significant decrease in income, which is normally derived from sales of this product. Alternative sources – sales of timber and straw – are generating less income because of strong supply due to the higher number of people engaged in the activity.

Humanitarian actions: Interventions by the armed forces will support humanitarian access and the implementation of response plans to address the needs of vulnerable people in the area.

Most likely food security outcomes

Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) food insecurity will continue in the zone from February to May and from June to September 2020. The effects of civil insecurity, combined with localized flooding, will further reduce planting areas for rice and peppers, further reduce production of both crops and significantly reduce economic opportunities for labor. Production of rice and peppers is expected to be very low and households will rely even more on food assistance to meet their food needs. The lack of own rice production, and low purchasing power due to loss of income from peppers, will lead to poor household nutrition, and malnutrition among children under 5 years of age.

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

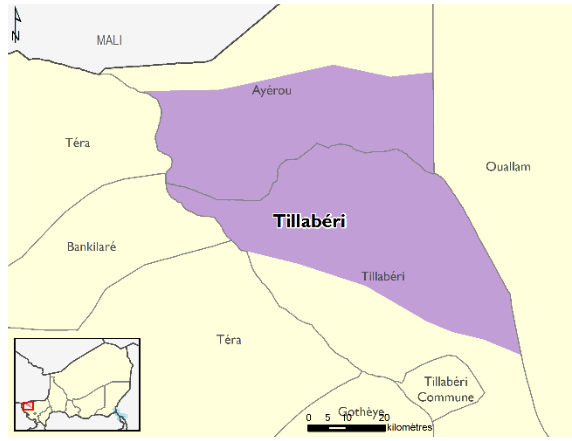
Area	Events	Impact on food security outcomes
Conflict-affected areas	• Further development of the security crisis and a substantial increase in the number of displaced persons and their needs • Response planning that does not take into account any deterioration in the security situation and increased needs • Decrease in the volume of humanitarian assistance and poor distribution over time • Increased disruption to market system in Niger and Nigeria in terms of the supply flow to local markets • Significant increase in consumer prices	These events are likely to lead to increased difficulties in accessing food and livelihoods, resulting in a larger proportion of the population being in Crisis (IPC Phase 3)
	• New cases of flooding due to rising water in the Komadougou River	Decrease in agricultural production of rice and peppers Significant increase in consumer prices

Agropastoral zone in the Ayorou Department

Current situation

This livelihood zone is characterized by agriculture and other income-generating activities. Most of the population is engaged in agricultural activities, including the production of cereals (millet, sorghum and rice) and cash crops (cowpeas, sesame and rice). Production is mainly for self-consumption. However, some produce is also sold on the markets to meet needs. Cash crops (cowpeas, sesame) are the main products sold on the markets and often locally to earn money.

Figure 4. Reference map: Agropastoral zone in Ayorou Department



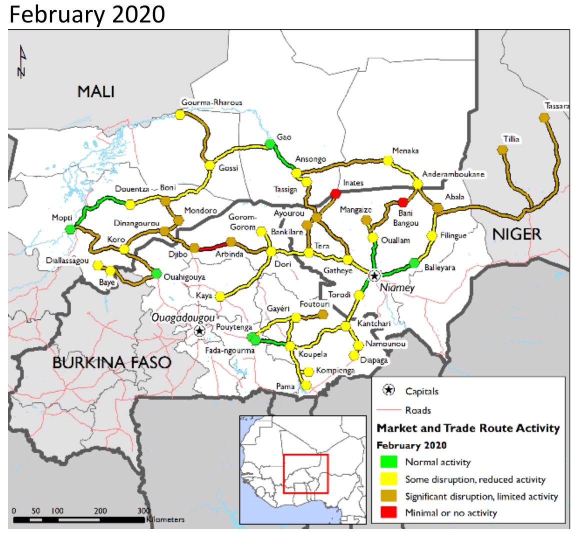
Source: *FEWS NET*

Livestock activities also include the purchase of livestock for fattening and breeding. There are significant sales throughout the year in the zone, but these peak at the time of major religious celebrations (Eid al-Adha) and during the lean season from June to August. From March to September, animal prices will be low because grazing land is in short supply, transhumant herds are departing and affluent and middle-income households are forced to sell some animals to cover not only agricultural labor carried out by the poor, but also purchases of supplies. Milk is also produced, with high production periods from August to September for cattle and from October to February for goats and sheep. Populations in this agropastoral zone are also engaged in activities in the forest, particularly foraging leaves and fruit, which are mostly intended for their own consumption.
Handicrafts are practiced, but are limited to the creation of local items, such as mats and straw panels.

Other activities also take place in the area, such as the following:

- Agricultural employment, ranging from land preparation for harvest to overwintering and irrigation work, whereby disadvantaged households of the community are employed in other households' fields
- Non-agricultural employment (brick manufacturing, construction, etc.)
- Exodus from immediately after the harvest in mid-December, until mid-May (three to six months)

Figure 5. Mapping of markets in Liptako-Gourma, February 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

Threats and vulnerabilities: Since 2017, the population of the Tillabéri region bordering Mali has been experiencing the effects of growing conflicts between armed groups and intercommunity conflicts in northern Mali, with the resulting ongoing population displacements estimated at 40 percent. As of 21 January 2020, more than 5,500 people had fled from their communities as a result of the upsurge in attacks. These include over 120 households, or almost 500 people, most of whom are women and children, who have been accommodated in the Maison des Jeunes et de la Culture (youth and culture center) in the community. Many other IDPs, estimated at 2,300 (360 households), have settled in Banibangou, a difficult area for humanitarian actors to access due to insecurity and the imposition of military escorts still in force in that part of the region. Another 2,500 people (404 households) have settled in Ayourou and Tisghel, and 270 others (30 households) have settled in Abala. Displaced persons from Nzouet are experiencing secondary displacement. Testimonies indicate that civilian populations are fearing for their lives, after an ultimatum from armed groups. They are targets of attacks, kidnappings or assassinations, and their property is being appropriated by these groups. In escaping, the refugees and displaced persons were able to take only what they could carry, leaving behind their homes and property. Thus, border localities in some communes in these departments are increasingly becoming lawless zones, where non-state armed groups are traveling freely and imposing their will. This involves primarily the collection of taxes (tithes) on livestock and property, atrocities and arson attacks in school villages, looting of resources and requirement to pay certain so-called 'taxes'.

The security measures introduced following the declaration of a state of emergency in the region in June 2016 have not been effective. For this reason, additional measures have been added, namely the imposition of military escorts for humanitarian missions and the ban on the use of motorcycles in all departments of the region, except Kollo. This will make it very difficult to access populations, particularly those in need. In short, even though there is a planned and budgeted response, the climate of insecurity is seriously hampering its implementation.

Food sources: Access to food and livelihoods are among the main concerns of these displaced persons. This is causing continued movement from primary camps to secondary and tertiary centers in search of livelihoods or for security reasons. Data collected during the FEWS NET rapid assessment of food security in January 2020 show that the categories of households concerned are already resorting to stress strategies. Their main survival strategies are local solidarity (donations from the host community), daily farm work for cash or payment in-kind, and the sale of timber and straw on the local market. A total of 5,030 households were recorded to be in deficit following the lean season distributions, out of a total of 10,213 IDP households across the Tillabéri region, at the end of September 2019.

The implementation of humanitarian assistance is being primarily influenced by:

- The persistent threat that armed groups pose to populations
- Targeted attacks on traders and tribal chiefs and the payment of "zakat", or legal tithes, by major livestock farmers, failing which their animals will be taken away
- Taking of hostages, proliferation of illegal weapons and explosive devices in the area
- Very limited financial capacity of communes to support populations that are experiencing difficulties
- Difficulties in accessing and providing emergency assistance to all displaced persons

Income sources: Income-generating activities are limited because of attacks and the threat of attack in the area. In most cases, displaced households are mostly composed of women and children, and therefore have low productivity. This is compounded by increasing poverty, due to the closure of some markets, the ban on the use of motorcycles, and a slowdown or even cessation of commercial activities. Income sources are also being depleted due to recurring theft and looting, imposition of taxes, and especially lifestock theft, which is diminishing the livelihoods of populations, particularly livestock farmers. Data collected during the FEWS NET rapid assessment of food security in January 2020 show that target households are currently resorting to stress strategies.

Nutritional situation: The provisional findings of the September 2019 SMART survey show GAM of 8.4 percent. In December 2019, the prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age in the region was 5,562 cases, compared with 6,662 cases in December 2018, a decrease of 17 percent. At the department level, however, there were 959 cases, compared with 317 cases in December 2018, an increase of 203 percent. Meanwhile, the status of notifiable diseases such as measles, meningitis and cholera remains relatively calm throughout the region.

Current food security outcomes

Vulnerable households made up of displaced persons and host households are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), due to loss of agricultural production when displaced persons have abandoned their fields as a result of security incidents, and the fact that they have moved in with host families whose limited supplies have been depleted through sharing their food rations. In order to meet food costs, host families are engaging in extensive sales of their livelihood resources, in the form of small ruminants and agricultural equipment. Despite extensive sales of assets, and due to their income being too low to cover growing consumption needs following the arrival of displaced persons, the food consumption of households is not covering their energy needs. Security incidents and security measures are significantly limiting livelihood activities and humanitarian access.

Assumptions

In addition to the above assumptions, the most likely food security scenario between February and September 2020 in this area is based on the following assumptions.

Food availability: Problems with access to cropland have led to a significant reduction in agricultural production. Producer stocks are low and will not last beyond the period February/March 2020.

Horticultural crops are being grown, but the current state of emergency will further reduce areas and production. Although the growing season is expected to start as normal, security measures will impede access to land and thus a further reduction in agricultural production is expected.

Income sources: The ban on the use of motorcycles, which previously provided a paid means of transport, combined with the decline in production of cash crops and horticultural crops, and strong competition in complementary activities such as the sale of timber and straw, will lead to a significant decline in household income and purchasing power.

Security situation and population movements: Security incidents will multiply and will lead to an increase in the number of IDPs.

Humanitarian actions: Security measures, and attacks often targeting humanitarian actors, will restrict access to populations affected by the security crises, and therefore interventions will be of limited benefit to populations in need.

Most likely food security outcomes

Food insecurity will continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from March to May and from June to September among poor resident households and displaced persons. Civil insecurity will prevent access to millet and sorghum fields, and harvest stocks will be depleted. There will be poor supply to markets, and high prices will reduce access to and purchases of consumer products. The security measures and terrorist attacks will prevent access to the zone and its populations for food assistance. Limited access to staple foods, combined with restrictions on access to health centers, will continue to worsen children's nutrition.

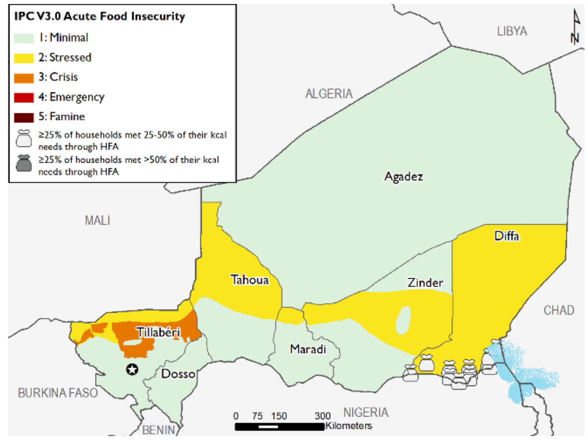
Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most likely scenario.

Area	Events	Impact on food security outcomes
Conflict-affected areas	• An upsurge in attacks and a significant increase in the number of displaced persons and in population needs • Significant disruption to traditional trading flows, especially supply to local markets • Significant increase in consumer prices • Lower cash remittances than expected • A ban on the sale of timber	These events would lead to an increase in the number of displaced persons and in population needs, and greater difficulties in accessing food and livelihoods. This would increase consumption deficits, which would affect a greater proportion of households and for a longer period, intensifying Crisis (IPC Phase 3)

MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES AND AREAS RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE*

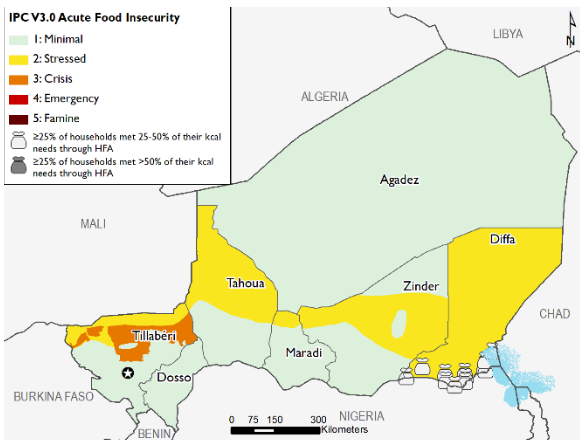
Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.0 humanitarian assistance mapping protocols and flags where significant levels of humanitarian assistance are being/are expected to be provided. indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average 25–50 percent of their caloric needs through humanitarian food assistance (HFA). indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average over 50 percent of their caloric needs through HFA. This mapping protocol differs from the (!) protocol used in the maps at the top of the report. The use of (!) indicates areas that would likely be at least one phase worse in the absence of current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

Current food security outcomes, February 2020



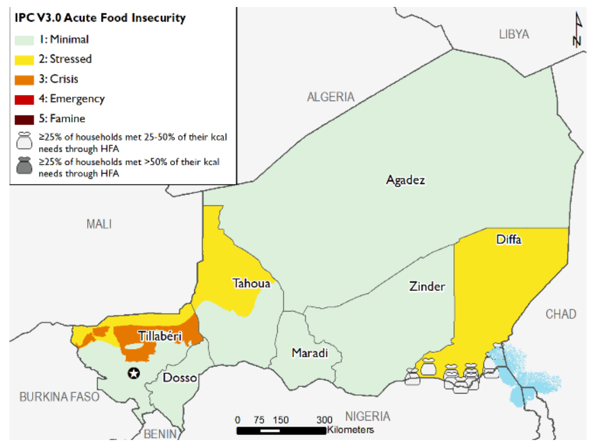
Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2020



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.

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes for the coming 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 arrive at a most likely scenario for the coming eight months. Usually, FEWS NET outlines the most likely scenario. Learn more here.