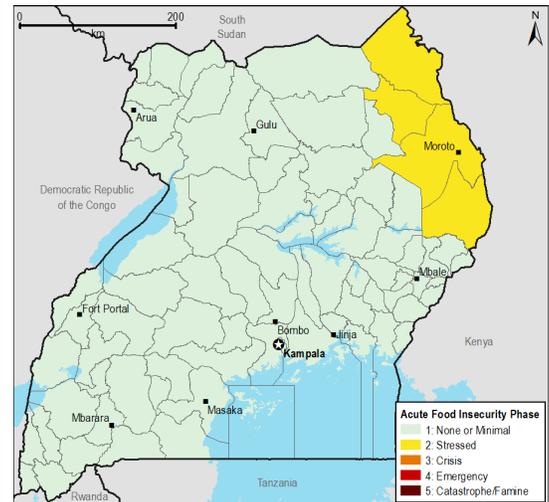


First season rains start favorably across the country

KEY MESSAGES

- Both bimodal and unimodal areas of the country have received average to above average seasonal rainfall and a timely harvest in June is expected. Minimal acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 1) is expected in bimodal areas through September 2013.
- Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are expected to continue through at least June 2013 in the Karamoja region due to the effects of last season's below-average harvests. In both agropastoral and pastoral zones.
- Markets remain sufficiently supplied with staples which has kept retail prices for most staples unusually low for the month of March. It is expected that prices will remain low throughout the outlook period.

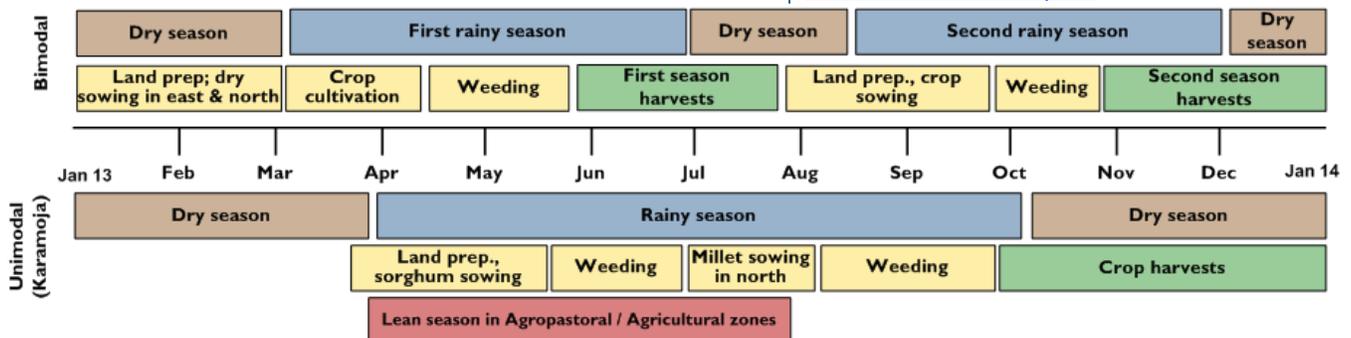
Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, April 2013



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale for more on this scale.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

- **Timely onset of seasonal rains:** The onset of rains in most bimodal areas was timely, except for a few areas in districts around Lake Kyoga and in the extreme southern districts of Isingiro, parts of Ntungamo and Rakai districts spots where rains were 1 to 2 dekads late. The country has received enhanced rainfall since the onset of first season rains around mid-March. This is consistent with the earlier forecast by the Meteorological department of Uganda for normal to above normal rainfall. These rains have provided favorable conditions for cropping and pasture production (Figures 2 and 3). The Water requirements satisfaction index (WRSI) is an indicator of crop performance based on the availability of water to the crop during the growing season while Soil Water Index (SWI) is a measure of soil water at a particular time as a percentage of the Water Holding Capacity (WHC) of a soil type.

Figure 2. Soil Water Index as at April 2013 Dekad 2

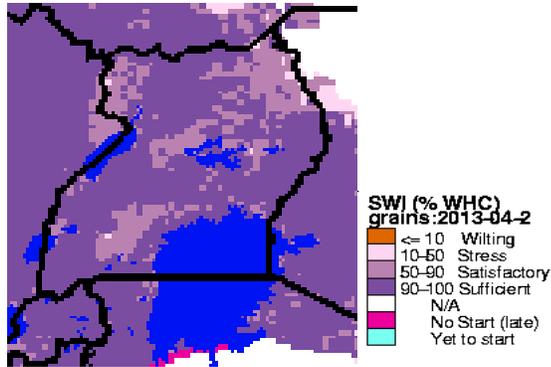
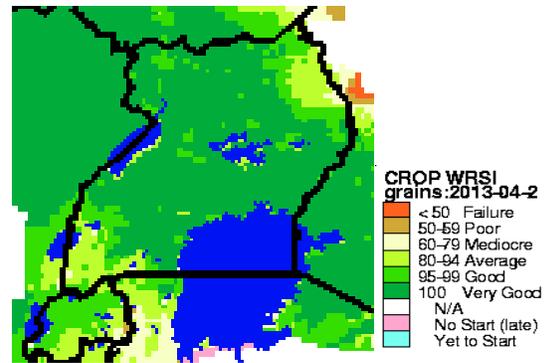


Figure 3. WSRI extended (up to end of growing season)



Source: USGS/FEWS NET

- Seasonal progress:** Despite the timeliness of the rains and an accompanying Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) advisory recommending early planting, sowing took place at different times in different areas. Because of this, the staple crops planted are at varying stages of growth. Roughly 15 to 45 percent of the planted crops are at the vegetative stage, nearing flowering. Weeding is ongoing, as is planting of root crops like sweet potatoes or cassava.
- Favorable livestock production conditions:** The normal to above normal rainfall being received has replenished both water and pasture resources. Livestock body conditions are currently good.
- Lower prices for food staples than expected:** Normally, in March April, stocks begin to decline and therefore cause prices to trend upwards. However, this year, staple retail prices for the month of March have uncharacteristically declined or remained low. The following staple crops were below last years' retail prices; bananas in Mbarara (-39%) and in Kampala (-13%), sorghum in Lira (-19%) and Soroti (-10%), millet in Lira (-7%), beans Kampala (-10%), Gulu (-5%), and Mbarara (-4%). The markets remain sufficiently supplied with most staples except for cassava chips which are exhibiting increased higher prices compared to February prices.
- Stable food security situation for bimodal areas:** The second season harvests in most bimodal areas were normal to above normal, replenishing food stocks for both rural and urban households. The supply of staple foods from surplus to deficit areas has stabilized prices. Households are able to meet basic food needs and maintain current livelihoods. Therefore these areas are classified as having Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity.
- Food security Stress prevails in the Karamoja region:** More than 20 percent of the households in the pastoral and agropastoral zones of Karamoja are face food security Stress (IPC Phase 2). This follows the poor to below average harvest last year due to waterlogging and an outbreak of fungal disease on sorghum (the main staple crop). Most households are dependent on the market for the bulk of their food during this longer than usual lean period and are unable to meet their minimum food requirements and still afford key non-food expenditures.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario during the April - September 2013 period is based on the following national-level assumptions:

- Enhanced seasonal rains into May:** While normal to above normal rains have been received, enhanced rainfall amounts are expected in the next 10 days giving a prolonged rainfall peak into early May according to the NOAA/CPC short-range precipitation forecasts.
- First season harvests:** From the evidence of rainfall received and seasonal progress, average to above average crop production levels are expected between June and August. Both national food requirements as well as regional demand are expected to be sufficiently met through normal crop sales by farmers.
- Livestock conditions and milk production:** The rainfall being received countrywide is expected to provide favorable conditions for livestock production with abundance of water and pasture resources throughout the scenario period. No major outbreaks of contagious livestock disease that would require quarantines or the closure of livestock markets are anticipated.

- Price watch in the near term:** In line with seasonal trends, retail prices are expected to peak towards the end of April into May when household and market stocks decline. Peak prices of most staples are expected to near or below last years' prices at the same time. In the month June, price volatility may be observed as green consumption of fresh harvests begins to appear on the market in preparation for new dry harvests on the market.
- Trade:** Trading activities within Uganda, as well as with neighboring countries, are expected to behave normally with high levels of demand from nearby countries, including Kenya, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. No policy interventions preventing the free movement of food commodities from surplus to deficit production areas are anticipated.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Food security outcomes will remain favorable throughout most parts of the country since the average to above average second season harvests (November-January) adequately replenished household food stocks to usual levels. Markets are sufficiently supplied and retail prices lower than last year at the same time. This will enhance food access by poor households in the rural and urban areas that are dependent on markets as their major food source. The timely onset and enhanced rains have bolstered the availability of agricultural labor opportunities for poor households from seasonal activities. This will improve their incomes for food access from the markets. In addition, increased milk production levels in both bimodal and unimodal areas will supplement household nutritional requirements and incomes for households with livestock, though the months of May to August when supply begins to decline as the dry season sets in. The time lag before the expected upward trend in retail prices just before the harvest season is shorter than usual (one month to harvesting) and therefore poor households will experience their impact for a shorter period. In bimodal areas of the country, most households will be able to meet both their food and non-food needs, without engaging in any atypical coping strategies throughout the outlook period, meaning that minimal to none (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity will be observed through September 2013. However Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security outcomes prevail in the agropastoral and pastoral zones of Karamoja due to below average harvests. Below average cash incomes during this lean season (January-July) will restrict the ability of poor households to access food through markets until August when green consumption and eventual dry harvests are expected.

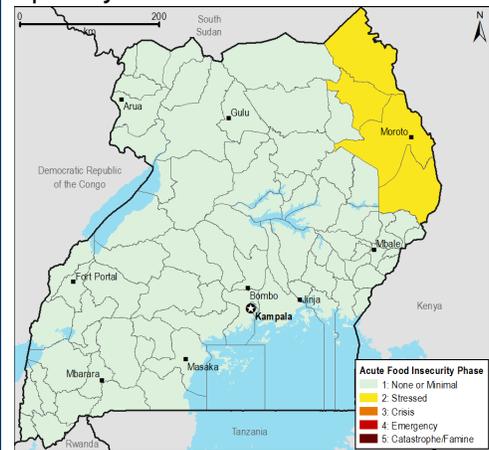
AREAS OF CONCERN

Agropastoral and Pastoral livelihood zones in Karamoja

Recent livelihood dynamics in the pastoral and agropastoral zones: Available evidence suggests a rapid change in livelihoods since 2008. The FAO Karamoja Food security Assessment report 2012 reports increased importance of crop production in the pastoral zone as a source of food (>30 percent vs. <10 percent in 2008). This means that that food production was greater in some pastoral areas than in some agropastoral or even agriculture zones. The report also suggests a 20-50 percent reduction in livestock ownership among the poor households. Many households in the pastoral zone do not own any livestock. Livestock sales remain an important source of income, but for the poor, these sales are being done at unsustainable levels. Cash earned from charcoal production has reached roughly 15% of annual income, another change from the past. Other income sources are also becoming more prominent, including mining for precious stones/minerals and brewing.

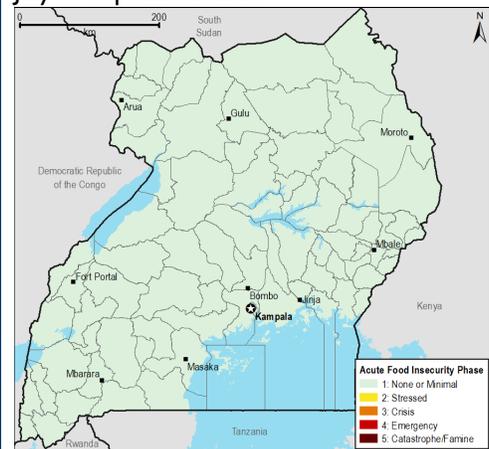
Current Situation

Figure 4. Projected food security outcomes, April to June 2013



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 5. Projected food security outcomes, July to September 2013



Source: FEWS NET

These maps represent *acute* food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and do not necessarily reflect *chronic* food insecurity. Visit www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale for more on this scale.

Onset and steady impact of seasonal rains on the rangelands and livestock: The agropastoral livelihood zone covers northern Nakapiripirit, Napak, Moroto, Kotido, and Kaabong Districts of Karamoja while the pastoral zone shares eastern parts of Moroto, Kaabong and Amudat Districts. The areas have experienced substantial amounts of rainfall following the beginning of the wet season in early April.

- **Impact on rangelands and livestock:** Rains have created favorable conditions for improved livestock production outcomes. Despite the normal January-March dry season, pasture and water resources declined at a slower rate than usual due to unseasonal rains in December. Pasture is fairly abundant, even in areas that were burnt in the dry months of January and February. Livestock conditions remain fairly good as the peak birthing period (April-June) begins. Calving down and the abundance of pasture is steadily increasing the supply of milk (April-July for peak production) to households that own cattle and those households that can afford to buy milk. The April-June period is typically characterized by high disease incidence among livestock, mainly from contagious bovine pleural pneumonia, the endemic tick borne diseases, sporadic diseases like worm infestations. This increases veterinary expenses around this time of year.
- **Impact on crop production:** The months of March and April marked the timely onset of routine seasonal cropping activities that include, bush clearing, land preparation, sowing and planting among others. The onset of steady rains mid April as earlier forecasted by the Meteorological department of Uganda has provide sufficient moisture for the planted crops. The cumulative rains however in most parts of the zones have been above normal causing water logging and flooding, especially in the lowland areas. The availability of labor opportunities arising from the seasonal activities will provide additional incomes to poor households.

Food and Income Sources: Food stocks from own production from the July-October harvests last year are near or already exhausted since the new harvest did not sufficiently replenish household stocks to usual levels. This was because of the poor to below average harvests caused by water logging and fungal diseases on sorghum, the staple crop. The majority of poor households are depending on food purchase for between 40-60 percent of the food sources. Consumption of wild food is ongoing since March and has increased in importance (April – July) as the steady rains are received, however this is occurring at above-normal levels to try to fill the gap in own food sources from last season. Additional income is being derived from casual labor opportunities (Land prep and planting) brought about the beginning of the wet season (March-July). Peak livestock sales usually occur in the March-June period and will also provide cash to purchase food. April is a peak charcoal/firewood sales period. Additional food incomes from the cash/food for work programmes of WFP, Caritas, Samaritan's Purse, World Vision and ACF among other partnering organizations that are supporting the extremely vulnerable households to meet their livelihood needs.

Food security outcomes: More than 20 percent of the households are depending on a combination of purchases and food assistance and are facing a livelihood protection deficit of between 2-3 months (FAO, Karamoja Food Assessment draft report, November 2012). The analysis outcomes from the same report indicate that food deficits faced this year are larger than the past two years. The lean season ordinarily which begins in March was 2-3 months' earlier for some poor households and is on-going until July. The Household Economy Analysis outcomes from last year indicate that very poor and poor households are selling livestock at unsustainable levels in order to fund food purchases. Poor households under food stress, and unable to afford some key non-food expenditures. On the other hand, the arrival of rains has replenished water resources and this is improving water utilization since households no longer travel long distances. Hygiene and food utilization of the very poor is improving.

At least 20 percent of households in this zone are experiencing minimally adequate food consumption levels and are unable to afford some essential nonfood expenditures without engaging in irreversible coping strategies. Therefore, this zone is currently classified as facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity (Figure 3).

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for April to September 2013 is based on the following regional assumptions:

- **Steady progress of seasonal rains during the remainder of the rainy season**
- **Nonfarm incomes:** April-September will be characterized by low charcoal/firewood sales since rains do not favor their production/collection and marketing. Supplemental incomes from grass sale will resume in September onwards to normal levels,

- **Casual labor:** Incomes from casual labor opportunities expected to peak beginning with the month of April through July as land preparation, planting activities, weeding occur during this time. A minimal increase in income from this source is expected.
- **Farm income:** A normal to above normal harvest is expected considering the timely onset and sufficient amounts to meet crop requirements. Crop sales expected to be normal beginning with September, the last month of the scenario period.
- **Livestock sales:** Livestock sales will occur throughout the outlook period at atypically high levels. April through June will be the peak period for livestock sales. Source expected to contribute more than 50 percent of the household income
- **Lean season:** It is expected that the lean season will end in July with a normal harvest when the green consumption and harvesting crops like maize and beans begins to provide the much needed source of food as normal to above normal rainfall is forecasted. Market food purchases will remain an important source of food during the unusually long lean season by upto 2 months.
- **Supplemental food sources:** The consumption of wild foods as an additional food source is expected to occur throughout the next six months at above-average levels. The expected normal rains in April onwards will be adequate to produce a normal supply of wild vegetables; wild food consumption will peak between April and June.
- **Milk production:** Between the months of April and June, milk production is expected to peak at moderate levels as the rainy season improves pasture and water availability.
- **Livestock disease burden:** While the period April-September usually a period of high incidence of disease burden for common contagious diseases in the area, no major disease outbreak like foot and mouth disease will occur to significantly impact livestock herds, human health and the normal functioning of the livestock markets

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Households will be under stress, with minimally adequate food consumption (April-July) since their ability to access food will be below normal levels. Total income levels will not be sufficient to meet the livelihood protection threshold since they are not able to cover their non-food expenditure. Income levels expected to increase to normal levels in August-September when crops sales resume. The poor households will moderately increase their dependence on the market (April-July). In this case trading activities and operation of markets will be vital to maintain constant volumes at stable prices. The longer than usual lean season will cause households to increase consumption of wild foods (April-June) (e.g. tamarind, mushrooms, game and wild vegetables). Poorer households will increasingly be willing to engage in casual labor opportunities in nearby towns and on-farm labor in April through May/June. Unsustainable sale of livestock as an atypical strategy for survival of the poor households in the short term will occur. These will impact their assets negatively. Although charcoal production/sale normally is low during the scenario period, higher levels than usual of dependence on the natural resource sales (firewood, charcoal) may be observed carrying on from previous peak levels. The usual on-going developmental assistance through food/cash for work is expected to operate normally though it is unclear how the government will respond to any heightened food deficits/needs. The households in this area are classified as IPC phase 2 through June/July, when they will have minimally adequate food consumption but unable to afford essential non-food expenditures without engaging in irreversible strategies to access food. The food security outcomes will likely improve to IPC Phase 1 in August and September when green consumption of maize and other crops will begin (Figure 3).

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table I: Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Karamoja agropastoral and pastoral zones	Above normal rainfall amounts in May and June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would destroy large acreages of land through water logging, create conducive conditions for fungal disease attack on sorghum, the main staple crop • Road damage and inaccessibility to the region may cut off essential supplies, causing marketing disruptions and creating low supply that may result in high prices to deny the poor food

		access
Karamoja agropastoral and pastoral zones	An outbreak or increased incidence of livestock diseases, such as contagious bovine pleural pneumonia (CBPP) or foot and mouth disease (FMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarantines are put in place that would reduce or delay livestock sales and reduce household income levels critical for the market dependent households
Karamoja agropastoral and pastoral zones	Abnormally high prices for staple foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market food access would be severely limited for poor households

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes over a six-month period, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes those assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to develop scenarios estimating food security outcomes. Typically, FEWS NET reports the most likely scenario.