

*Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes in Karamoja likely to persist until July 2019*

**ABOUT THIS UPDATE**

FEWS NET Food Security Outlook Updates in September 2018 have an extended outlook beyond the standard projection period. The end of this report includes a discussion of most-likely outcomes through the end of the next lean season for this country. Reporting for this country may follow a non-standard schedule in the coming months. Check back regularly for [new analysis](#), [subscribe for report updates](#), or follow us on [social media](#).

**KEY MESSAGES**

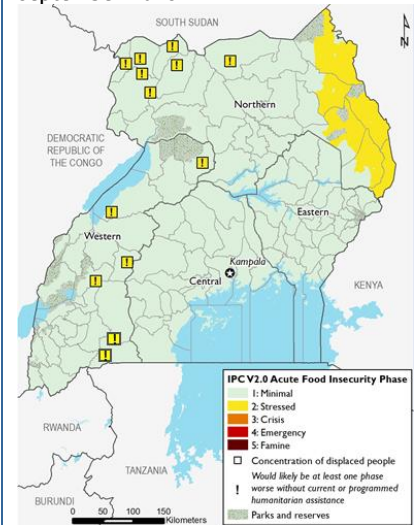
- Second season harvests in bimodal Uganda are expected to be average to above-average and are likely to sustain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes through January 2019. Despite current rainfall deficits, the increased likelihood of a weak El Niño event from October 2018 to May 2019 is anticipated to cause average to above-average cumulative rainfall, enhancing agricultural productivity through the end of the 2019 first season.
- In Karamoja, harvests are significantly below average following an estimated 60 to 80 percent crop loss. Given that crops make up approximately 30 percent of households' food and income sources and households are able to expand typical coping strategies, this is not expected to lead to food consumption gaps for most households. Nevertheless, poor households are employing some consumption coping strategies and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are likely to persist until the end of the next lean season.
- According to UNHCR, 7,791 South Sudanese and 1,667 DRC refugees entered Uganda in August. Humanitarian assistance remains the key food source among refugees and sustained Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) outcomes in September, but refugees would likely deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) if cuts to rations occur.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Unevenly distributed light to moderate rainfall has characterized the early part of the bimodal second season, particularly in northern and eastern Uganda. According to remote sensing satellite imagery and FEWS NET field reports, rainfall since August 1<sup>st</sup> has been 51 to 90 percent of the long-term average (1981-2010), resulting in 30-day soil moisture (0-10 cm) deficits of 20 to 50 percent. The worst-affected areas include Teso, Bugisu, Sebei, and Bukedi sub-regions. An increase in rainfall since late August in Western and Central regions prompted farmers to initiate land preparation and planting activities; however, planting may be delayed in Eastern region. Average to below-average vegetation and pasture conditions and slow replenishment of livestock water resources currently prevail but are expected to improve as the season progresses. Although the seasonal forecast indicates average to above-average cumulative rainfall is most likely, it is possible crops will not germinate if rainfall distribution remains erratic.

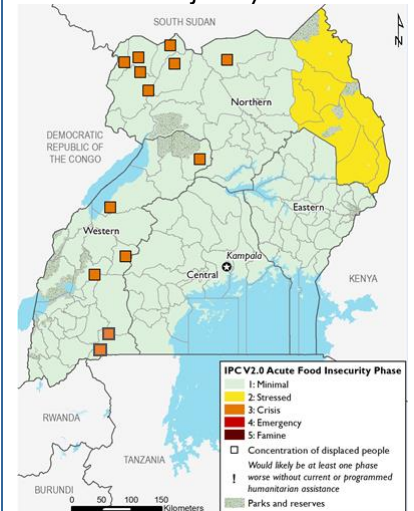
In Karamoja, the unimodal harvest is now expected to be significantly below average, ranging from an estimated 20 to 40 percent of normal levels across districts. This is attributed to the cumulative impacts of heavy waterlogging from March to

Current food security outcomes, September 2018



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, October 2018 to January 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.

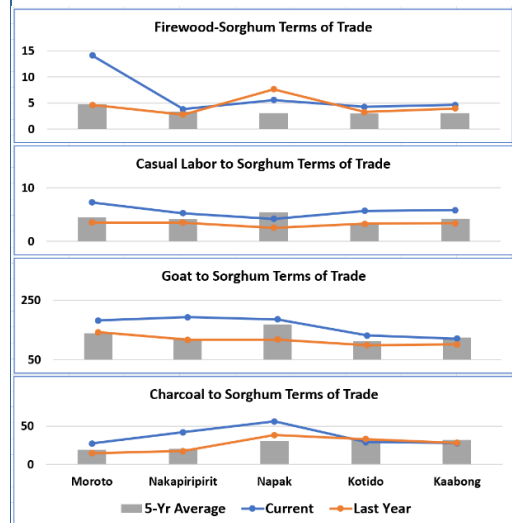
June that led to high pest incidence, crop loss, and delayed and/or repeated planting as well as erratic, below-average rainfall from July to late August. Based on FEWS NET’s field observations and key informant interviews, most late-planted sorghum is stunted and unlikely to reach maturity. Maize and other crops such as beans, pigeon peas, sunflower, and groundnuts also performed poorly. As a result, households have not replenished their stocks from own production and continue to rely on market purchases. Kotido and Kaabong districts are the worst-affected, with far below-average harvests delayed to late September/October. Although Nakapiripirit and most of Moroto and Napak districts have completed harvesting, harvests are below-average and were delayed by two months or more. However, given that crops make up approximately 30 percent of households’ food and income sources and households are able to expand typical coping strategies, this is not expected to lead to food consumption gaps for most households.

Nationally, household and market food stocks are expected to remain well supplied from above-average first season cereal production until the November/December second season harvest. Although first season crop production in Teso sub-region and parts of the eastern and southwestern highlands was below average due to March to May flooding, waterlogging, and landslides, trade flows from surplus-producing to deficit-producing areas have smoothed market supply. Staple retail prices are generally below the five-year average due to lower market demand combined with decreased exports to Kenya, given Kenya’s good production season and increased trade competition with Tanzania. A notable exception is Teso’s Soroti district, where staples prices are gradually increasing. Overall, above-average food availability and below-average staple food prices are enabling households to access their food and non-food needs, supporting Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes.

In Karamoja, most poor households are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and cannot afford some essential non-food expenditures. Households are expanding normal livelihood coping strategies to earn income for food purchases, including sales of firewood and charcoal, petty trade, and brewing. As of August, the terms of trade for sorghum and other crops remained near or above average despite the expansion of these activities (Figure 1). The price of sorghum –supplied from bimodal areas – is below the five-year and 2017 averages, except in Kaabong district due to heightened demand.

According to UNHCR, 35,213 South Sudanese and 107,238 DRC refugees arrived in Uganda from January to August. In the settlements, July harvests on an average 900m<sup>2</sup> plot provided one to two months of food and are now exhausted. Food assistance remains the primary source of food, minimally supplemented by market purchases via crop sales, petty trade, casual labor, and sales of food assistance rations. Refugees that arrived at least two months ago and received a settlement plot are now preparing to plant in the second season; some better-off refugees have also hired land from local host communities to expand production. Rations continued at planned levels in September, maintaining Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) outcomes.

**Figure 1.** Sorghum terms of trade in five Karamoja districts (kg), August 2018.



Source: Farmgain Africa / FEWS NET

**UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS**

Revisions to assumptions used to develop the most likely scenario for the [June 2018 to January 2019 Outlook](#) include:

- Rainfall in the final weeks of Karamoja’s July to September rainy season is forecast to be average to below average and will not improve current poor crop performance.
- According to the IRI/CPC consensus forecast, the most likely ENSO phase for the October 2018 to May 2019 period is a weak El Niño. As a result, the September to November rainy season in bimodal Uganda is forecast to be average to above average, likely leading to decreased Fall Army Worm incidence on maize and average to above-average second season production. Cumulative rainfall during the bimodal March to May rainy season and unimodal April to September rainy season are most likely to be average, but there are many possible outcomes given the uncertainty of the current forecast.
- Regional maize exports from Uganda to Kenya are likely to be below average through December due to Kenya’s above-average harvests and competitive imports from Tanzania.
- Based on FEWS NET’s integrated price projections in Moroto, the retail price of sorghum is projected to range from 550

to 850 UGX/kg through May 2019, or slightly above the five-year average and 20 to 45 percent below last year’s price.

- Though planned, resources and logistics to support humanitarian food assistance beyond September 2018 have not been fully funded. As such, this scenario assumes the absence of humanitarian assistance.

**PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH JUNE/JULY 2019**

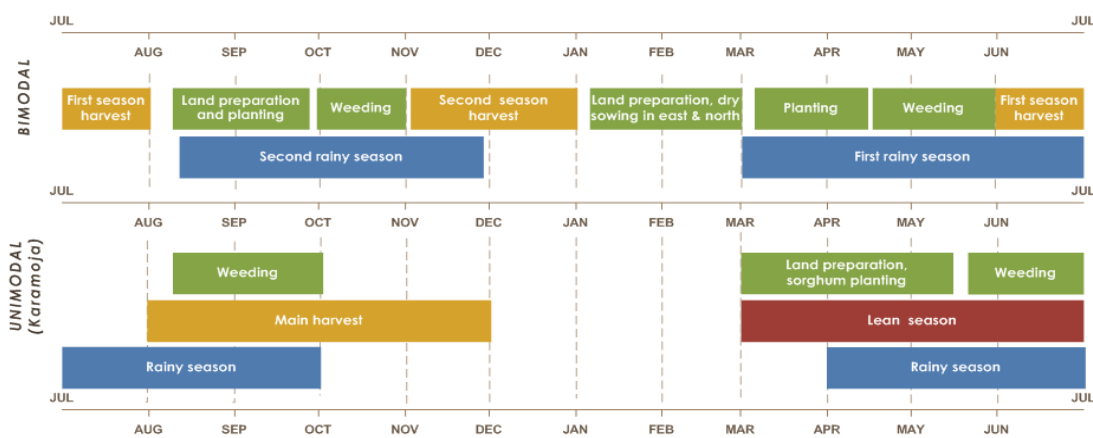
*Projected outcomes through January 2019:* In bimodal areas, current food stocks and anticipated average to above-average second season harvests are likely to sustain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes. Below-average staple prices will enhance food access for households dependent on market purchases, given the availability of typical income sources. In Karamoja, significantly below-average harvests will leave poor households highly reliant on market purchases to meet their minimum food needs, indicative of a prolonged, continuous lean season. Although consumption gaps are unlikely, most poor households will likely be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and may limit meal sizes, substitute less preferred foods, and reduce non-food expenditures. Without planned and funded assistance, refugees would likely deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

*Projected outcomes through the end of the next lean season (June/July 2019):* In February, household and market food stocks will be replenished in bimodal areas and staple commodity prices will be seasonally low. Prices will begin to seasonally increase in February to mid-March. Normal trade flows are likely to continue to circulate food commodities from surplus to deficit areas, including Karamoja. With average rainfall forecasted during the March to May rainy season, seasonal livelihood activities are likely to support Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes until harvests are available beginning in June to early July.

In Karamoja, most households will continue to be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) as the current prolonged lean season gives way to the start of the typical lean season in March 2019. As staple commodity prices rise near to or slightly above the five-year average, declining terms of trade will impact access to food. Households are expected to increase the intensity of coping strategies like firewood and charcoal sales, hunting and gathering, brewing, although crop cultivation labor opportunities will be available in February. For a small proportion of very poor households, these food and income sources will not be sufficient, and they are likely to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Acute malnutrition levels are expected to increase but remain within or slightly above a GAM (WHZ) prevalence of 10 to 15 percent, which is typical during the lean season. Under the assumption of average April to September rainfall, 2019 green harvests will become available beginning July, bringing an end to the lean season.

In refugee settlements, second and first season harvests are expected to provide food and minimal crop sales income for the one- to two-month period following each harvest. Newly arrived refugees that do not receive plots in time to plant will not be able to access own production. Although refugees will have minimal access to casual labor, petty trade, and other income-earning opportunities, this will not enable them to meet their minimum food needs. In the absence of humanitarian food assistance, these refugees would experience food consumption gaps and be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through June/July.

**SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR**



Source: FEWS NET

**ABOUT THIS UPDATE**

This monthly report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates FEWS NET’s quarterly Food Security Outlook. Learn more about our work [here](#).