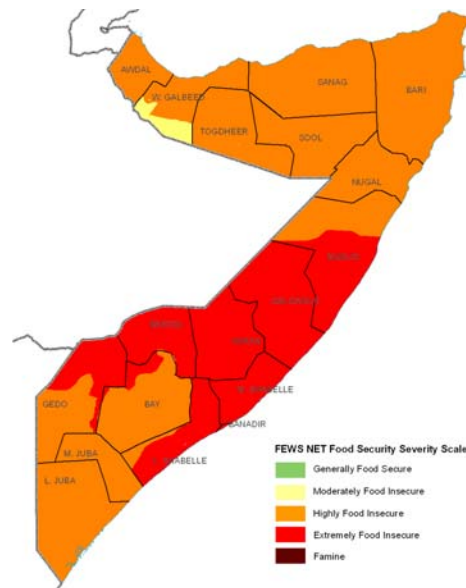


SOMALIA Food Security Outlook

April to September 2009

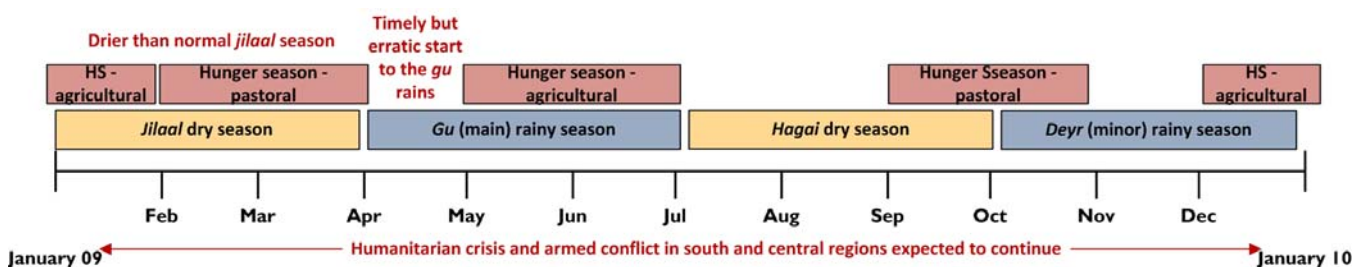
- The overall food security situation in many parts of the country will remain precarious over the coming six months. Though the prevailing *gu* rains may offer short term relief from water and pasture shortages in pastoral areas, 3.2 million people will continue to require humanitarian assistance and livelihood support through September 2009 when the *gu* harvest will occur.
- The 2009 *gu* rains began on time in many parts of the country but rainfall monitoring suggests that the progress of the season is below normal so far, raising concerns, especially among pastoral communities in the Central regions, Gedo, and Juba where serious water and pasture shortages are reported. Erratic *gu* rains may also result in another poor harvest in the agricultural areas between the Shabelle and Juba rivers, both riverine and rain fed.
- Although total commercial cereal imports for January to March 2009, estimated at 128,000 MT, are 55 percent higher than the January March three year average, increased sea piracy off the coast of Somalia continues to affect commercial and food aid imports. This may result in a further increase in food prices which are already at an all time high.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, March 2009



For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale
Source: FEWS NET/FSAU

Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

Current food security conditions

The overall food security situation in many parts of the country remains precarious as a result of successive seasons of poor rains, internal trade and import disruptions, insecurity, and general inflation. A prolonged and harsh *Jilaal* dry season due to the presence of a La Niña, a phenomenon associated with drier than normal conditions, led to early depletion of rangeland resources, especially in the drought affected Central regions and in Gedo and Juba, areas bordering northern Kenya. Over 3.2 million people in urban areas, rural settlements, and IDP camps are highly and extremely food insecure.

Owing to poor body conditions, due to a lack of pasture and water in most key pastoral areas, livestock productivity and prices are declining in all areas except the northwest. As a result, pastoralists' purchasing power, as measured by livestock:cereal terms of trade, has considerably decreased over the last three months and is 20 – 35 percent lower than the five year March average. Recent field interviews by FSAU field team also indicate that pastoralists continue to adopt distress coping strategies, like culling young calves and slaughtering weak animals. Insecurity, political tensions, and targeting of aid agencies also continues in many parts of south and central Somalia while the incidence of sea piracy reached at alarming levels especially during the last several weeks. Though numerous roadblocks and illegal checkpoints were eliminated in most of south and central regions, thereby improving flow of internal trade, ongoing restrictions on cross border population and trade movement continues to affect the food access and income of communities along the border, especially in Juba and Gedo region. Population displacement, as a result of insecurity, is now reported to be affecting Galgaduud region where there is a noticeable increase in families moving out of urban centers and towards rural areas.

In Hiraan region recent nutrition surveys conducted by FSAU in in April indicate a mixed picture, with a deterioration in the agropastoral to a very critical rates of 24.5 percent GAM from 15.9 percent in June 2008. Although malnutrition situation in the riverine population of Hiraan have slightly improved from 17.7 percent GAM to 15.9 percent GAM, the situation still remains critical and above the emergency WHO threshold of 15 percent.

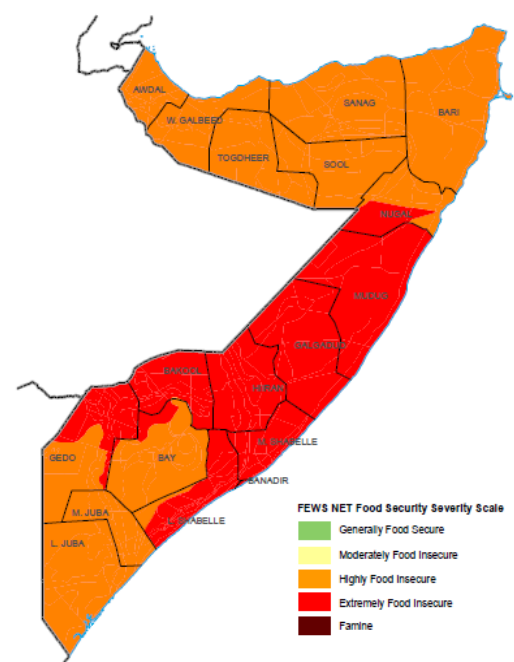
Among the **urban population and IDPs**, which heavily rely on market purchases and relief food, access to food has improved slightly over the last six months. This is due to a combination of factors including massive relief food distribution by food aid agencies, the appreciation of the Somali shilling, elimination of roadblocks and illegal checkpoints which eased transport and trade, enhanced ports activities, and a decline in staple food prices (see Annex). The economies of small towns and urban centers in Northeast and central regions have also benefited indirectly from the huge injection of piracy money into the local markets. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this inflow of dollars into the local economy has had multiplier effect and led the appreciation of Somalia Shilling against the US dollar. All these factors have contributed to marginal improvement in the cost of living of urban households, who were struggling to meet their basic food and non food needs. For instance, since October 2008, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in most urban centers declined moderately, improving the food security of the urban poor.

Most likely food security scenario (April –September 2009)

In the most likely scenario through September 2009, the overall food security situation in the country will remain precarious. Over 3.2 million people will continue to require humanitarian assistance and livelihood support through September 2009 when the *gu* harvest will occur.

The performance of the current *gu* rains has been mixed, with many areas, including parts of Gedo and most of central regions, receiving below normal rainfall. Problems of poor pasture and water still persist in key grazing areas of Mudug and Galgaduud regions, the epicenter of the current humanitarian crisis. Given the poor weekly forecast in the peak of the *gu* season, it is unlikely that the performance of the *gu* rains will improve in the remainder of the season. However, food security conditions in the country are not expected to improve significantly even if *gu* rains are normal, particularly in the **Shabelle Valley, Hiran, Mogadishu peri urban areas, Central regions, Bakool, and parts of the Gedo region** where a significant proportion of the rural population and IDPs have been extremely food insecure for several seasons (Figure 1). Though the prevailing *gu* rains may offer (if *gu* rains are normal) short term relief by improving water and pasture availability, the cumulative effect of successive seasons of poor rainfall, crops failure, livestock asset depletion, and high level of debts will continue to affect access to food and income for drought affected pastoral and agro pastoral communities

Figure 2. Most likely food security scenario, April – June 2009



Source: FEWS NET/FSAU

in those regions. In addition, cereal prices will remain high in the coming months, though they will likely decrease slightly, due to the *gu* harvest as well food aid interventions.

Due to a very harsh *Jilaal* dry season, livestock body conditions, productivity and value in the drought stricken and rain deficit areas of Central regions and Hiraan have further deteriorated and conditions are not expected to improve until mid to late June when, depending on the rainfall performance, rangeland resources will seasonally improve. Due to a harsh *Jilaal* season coupled with a poor start of the *gu* rains most calves and kids born during last *deyr* season have died in Central and Hiraan regions and many others are expected to perish over the coming weeks and months. Lactating and pack camels will also continue to die over the coming months due to hunger and endemic diseases. If IDPs households from Mogadishu continue to put pressure on the host communities in central region, *gu* rains continue to be erratic and the drought deepens, the number of people requiring emergency food aid assistance in those regions will likely increase in the coming six months.

For **urban populations and IDPs**, who heavily rely on market purchase/relief food, access to food is not expected to improve over the next six months, because the cost of living is expected to rise due to increased prices, especially for imported commodities and because increased sea piracy will affect trade and have a negative impact on the local economy. A lack of viable income sources/employment opportunities, continued displacement (the number of IDPs has increased since last December from 1.02 million to more than 1.2 million people), and a reduction in remittance inflows due to the global recession, also have the potential to contribute to a deterioration in the food security of the urban poor.

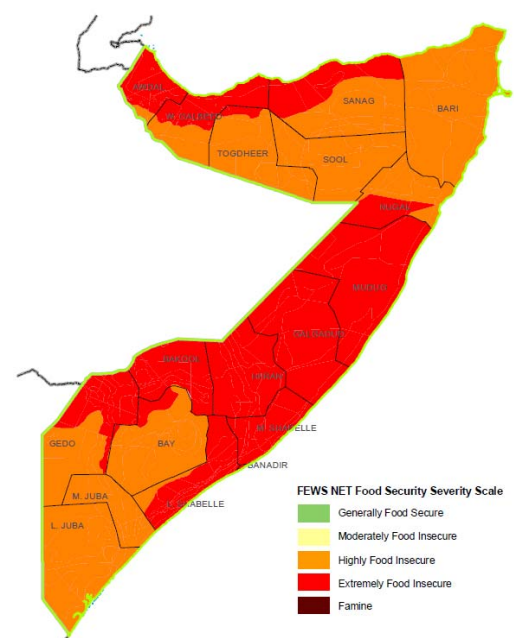
A new crisis has been emerging in **Gedo and Juba** regions neighboring northeastern Kenya. In those regions, poor *deyr* rainfall affected rangeland resources, resulting in abnormal migration and high mortality among young calves. As a result, milk and ghee production, and associated earnings, declined significantly. Water has also been more expensive than normal following a harsh *Jilaal* dry season. The food security situation of these pastoral communities will deteriorate in the coming six months because the massive deaths among young cattle born last December will mean that female cattle will produce less milk, regardless of the performance of the current *gu* rains. Already, significant numbers of the pastoral population in these regions have been highly food insecure for several seasons. Moreover, restrictions on cross border trade and population movement due to militia activities and related border closures, coupled with erratic *gu* rainfall, will likely result in further deterioration in food security conditions, especially during the next *hagai* dry season (July-September). In addition cereal prices are expected to increase further, especially for imported commodities, due to low supply and because the rains will make many areas inaccessible.

In the livestock dependent **Northwest and Northeast** regions, where rainfall performance for the last several seasons was largely good, livestock productivity and value has been normal and prospects for the next six months are good. Exceptions are, however, the less populated Golis and Guban livelihood zones, where localized drought has affected access to rangeland resources, thus reducing pastoralist access to food and income. If the *gu* rains are poor, populations in Golis, Guban, and the Sool Plateau could face extreme levels of food insecurity similar to 2001/02.

Prospects for livestock exports are good as the total livestock exported during January and February reached 324,169 head, 82 percent higher than the same period last year. Continued livestock export through Berbera and Bosasso ports is, therefore, expected to continue to support local economies through government tax, employment opportunities, and improved livestock markets. Accordingly, the food security situation in these regions is expected to improve in the coming six months.

In the most likely scenario, the number of people in need of humanitarian support in the country is not expected to drop from the current level of 3.2 million people, 40 percent of the country's

Figure 3. Most likely food security scenario, July-September 2009.



Source: FEWS NET/FSAU

population. Continued relief food distribution, supplementary feeding programs in areas where child malnutrition rates are high and livelihood support will be crucial. The Somalia 2009 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) requested about \$918 million. However according to UN OCHA, no significant funding has been forthcoming and the most important Clusters, like Agriculture and Livelihoods, Health, WASH, Education, and Shelter have not been funded. There is an urgent need to mobilize resources to prevent further deterioration of food and livelihood security.

Table 1: Events which could affect the food security outlook

Geographic Focus Area	Possible events in the next 6 months that would change the most likely scenario in this area	Impacts on food security conditions	Likelihood of occurrence*	Key variables to monitor
Central/Shabelle /Bakol	Above normal <i>gu</i> rainfall	Above normal <i>gu</i> rains will improve crop and rangeland production.	Unlikely	Cumulative precipitation and its distribution
	Cessation of conflict	Cessation of conflict will allow displaced communities to return to their home areas and ease burden on host communities.	Unlikely	Population movement and number of conflict incidences
Urban/IDP	Major conflict in Mogadishu.	More displacement and disruptions of markets will reduce markets and trade hence employment opportunities;	Likely	Number if IDPS, ports movement
Gedo/Juba	Above normal <i>gu</i> rainfall	Above normal <i>gu</i> rains will improve crop and rangeland production.	Unlikely	Rainfall, NDVI and migration pattern
Northeast and northwest	Above normal <i>gu</i> rainfall	Generally positive impact on crop production and pasture generation, particularly in Northeast and Northwest will lead to increased food availability.	Unlikely	Cumulative precipitation and its distribution
	Political instability/ conflict in contested areas	Re emergence of conflict between the Puntland and Somaliland over Sool and Sanaag regions lead to political tension and disruption of transport and trade flow.	Unlikely	Population movement and incidence of conflict.

* Probability levels	Description
Likely	Likely to occur in the time period under current conditions
Unlikely	Could occur in the time period if conditions changed moderately
Very unlikely	Could occur in the time period if conditions changed significantly

