

# SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update

August 2018

## FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

### *Erratic rains threaten food security*

Like elsewhere in Sudan (IFRC, 13 Aug 2018, FEWSNET, 31 Aug 2018), heavy and erratic rains have affected the planting season (June – August) in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The rains were also followed by a dry-spell and pest infestation (birds and insects). This, in combination with seed shortages, have affected the early growing season and it is already having serious consequences on the growing season of long-term sorghum in both areas.

Based on this current situation, poor crop production is expected this year. Long maturity type sorghum which is commonly planted has failed in most of the areas. Previously, communities in Blue Nile relied on quick maturing sorghum planted in September and October for the main lean season but with no seeds available and exhaustion of the early maize and sorghum crop, the lean season of 2019 is likely to be early and food insecurity situation worse next year.

Heavy rains are also creating extensive damage to properties. Heavy rainfall in August in South Kordofan destroyed about 495 houses in Heiban county while far farms of at least 30 households were affected in Meri Payam, Western Kadugli county.

Heavy rainfall on the Ethiopian Highland in the last two weeks of August, as well as around the border areas of Yabus and Moguf, have caused floods in Blue Nile that destroyed crops on farms along the rivers and all the way to Belatuma and Marinja according to CU monitors, forcing farmers to replant early in the season. On the other hand, erratic rain between Belatuma and Doro (South Sudan) led to the failure of almost all types of crops for the November – January harvest, inducing population displacement. Although rainfall was reportedly good in most areas of the Western Jebels in South Kordofan, maize crops failed on the near farms in Dilling and Lagawa counties according to CU monitors.



Photo: Tomo Kriznar

## Highlights

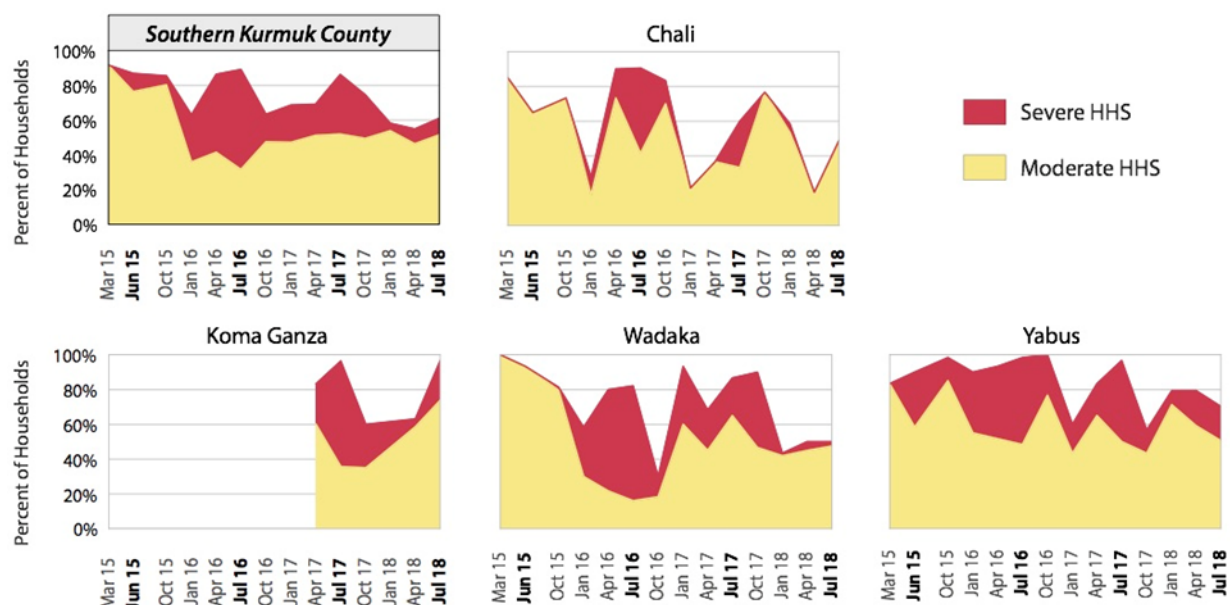
- Lack of food in Blue Nile is forcing people to move. Key informants reported widespread reliance on wild foods to satiate hunger.
- Heavy and erratic rains threaten food security for 2019 in SK and BN
- Livestock disease outbreaks affect livelihoods in SK and BN and could spread to Sudan and South Sudan



*Area between Doro and Belatuma*

Heavy rainfall has limited market operations and this, coupled with the poor harvest of the near farms, is exacerbating food insecurity in both areas. Poor and vulnerable communities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile — including many IDPs and refugees — have been affected by the marked increase in market prices, including of basic medication. Sudanese in various parts of the country have difficulty in coping with the continuously rising food and consumer goods prices according to a radio Dabanga report. Inflation, the austerity measures the Sudanese government took in 2017, as well as conflict in South Sudan and along the Ethiopian border are driving the high prices. A number of families said that the circumstances forced them to reduce their daily meals to just one.

Even where agriculture is still yielding some crops, there is still a lack of staple foods: in Western Kadugli sorghum is available but sim-sim, groundnuts and cowpeas are not. In the Western Jebels, commodity prices are still rising and maize and wheat are no longer available in the market.



*Severely food insecure household and populations, Southern Kordofan County, July 2018 - Source FSMU Special Bulletin July 2018*

In Blue Nile, prices are high in Wadaka and Yabus markets at a point in the year when households rely on market purchases to meet daily needs. Households in Yabus and Komo Ganza are engaging in crisis-level coping strategies as food insecurity continues to rise. The food insecurity in Blue Nile continues to be worrying, with an unprecedented level of people moving in search of food and livelihood opportunities, while also services to refugees in Maban (South Sudan) were partially interrupted after recent violence in Maban with youth demonstrations end of July. CU reports of people returning from the refugee camps seeking support from relatives who already are vulnerable. The Yabus Bala market is stretched with people coming from Komo Ganza community coming to seek for work and buy some food. The [special bulletin FSMU](#) published in July on the monitored areas in Southern Kurmuk county stated that “As many as 90 percent of Yabus households and 99 percent of Koma Ganza households reported coping with food insecurity by limiting portion sizes, reducing the number of meals they regularly consumed, and relying on less preferred foods. Key informants reported widespread reliance on wild foods to satiate hunger. Payam administrators said that Yabus households are also turning to mining, a high-risk activity, to meet daily needs. CU monitors confirmed heavy movement from Chali and Wadaka to towards gold mining areas.”

## HEALTH

### *Availability of medical supplies remains a challenge*

The most common illnesses that are expected at this time of year are malaria, pneumonia and other respiratory infections. The Secretariat of Health and humanitarian partners are working hand in hand to contain what appears to be a measles outbreak in Western Jebels. Availability of medical supplies remain a problem to this cut-off area.

## ANIMAL HEALTH

### *Disease outbreaks and lack of veterinary care hinder husbandry*

The Secretariat of Animal Health reported an increase in livestock deaths (cows, goats and sheep) in the areas of Wadaka, Moguf and Belatuma in Blue Nile. This sector remains sensitive to shocks, as there are very limited veterinary services and support from humanitarian partners in both areas. The risk of spreading of animal diseases to the rest of Sudan and to South Sudan is high and it requires urgent attention.

## WASH

### *Excessive rain and floods increase risk of disease outbreaks*

At the height of the rainy season the spread of acute watery diarrhea (AWD), cholera and other diseases exacerbated by poor hygiene practises remains a big risk. Health education along with adequate clean drinking water, waste disposal and infrastructure still remain areas where a lot of support is needed. The public health risks related to poor sanitation and hygiene infrastructure remain high in the Two Areas and is a special area of concern.

## EDUCATION

### *Access to education remains limited*

Whole communities still don't have access to the minimum accepted level of education for their children in the Two Areas. While primary schools are still closed until October, coaching is underway in South Kordofan and Western Jebels for primary school children for the anticipated exam in November. With limited food and no viable transport options, this journey can be difficult and dangerous.

## SECURITY

### *Political and tribal tension still running high*

After youth demonstrations in Maban in the last week of July, several local authority positions have been replaced. The Government of South Sudan launched an investigation of which the results are not yet published. The mass evacuation of humanitarian partners from the area has had an effect on the support for the refugee communities in Maban and Blue Nile with a delay in food distributions. An incident of inter-tribal fighting in the Sherkole refugee camp in Ethiopia in the last week of August in which at least one person was killed was reported by different sources. Political and tribal tension still run high in the area and should be closely monitored for its effect on the refugee populations, and the outlook for possible offensives in the dry season.

In South Kordofan, one incident of raiding was reported during which a cattle keeper was killed in Sougli Payam of Western Kadugli on 24 August. Cattle raids continue to spread fear and limit safe grazing locations for livestock.

The Sudan Government had urged the African mediation to resume the Two Areas talks.