

SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update

April 2019

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Fuel and cash shortages affect the Two Areas

Conditions on the ground in SPLM-N-controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile echoes what is written in [March's key message report of FewsNet](#): “Despite improved food availability from the 2018/19 harvest, many households are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes through September, the peak of the lean season. The atypically high need is driven by poor macroeconomic conditions, which are negatively impacting household purchasing power. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected in much of Darfur, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, southern Blue Nile, northern Kassala, and Red Sea states. During the peak of the lean season, IDPs in SPLM-N controlled areas of South Kordofan and SPLA-AW controlled areas of Jebel Marra are expected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4)”.

These macroeconomic conditions, along with the issuing of emergency law, and troop build-up seen along certain parts of the frontlines are having an effect on the markets in the SPLM-N controlled areas. Not only are traders fewer in some areas but CU monitors report a heightened level of tension and fear among crossline communities related to the insecurity in government-controlled areas, security restrictions imposed through the emergency law which impedes on free movement and trade. Many payams in Dilling County are almost exclusively depending for food on markets in which prices are rising above seasonal norms.

The continued influx of returnees fleeing the economic hardship and insecurity in government-controlled areas has seen an increase in the month of March, especially to Tobo County and Western Kadugli where over 290 people were verified to have arrived. This will further stretch the resources of already very fragile communities in the Two Areas.



Highlights

Increase in returnees to the Two Areas put pressure on already stretched resources

Prices continue to increase while access to markets diminish

Despite improved food availability, communities still face a lean season

The [FAO report March 2019](#) further describes the situation in Sudan: “Despite an above-average harvest, the strong depreciation of the national currency as well as high production and transports cost limited or more than offset the downward pressure on prices and kept them at record or near- record levels”.

Price increases have also been seen in Umdorein and Delami county of the Central Region in the month of March. Specific payams in Umdorein and Tobo County reported poor yields after the main harvest due to poor rainfall and pest encountered last year.

A lack of good livestock pasture is another challenge in Dilling County. As reported in the FSMU quarterly report, the share of households lacking food stocks is up from figures reported in 2018. In Western Jebels, the share of households entirely lacking food stocks increased from 38 percent in January 2018 to 46 percent in January 2019. The situation is especially critical in Dilling and Lagawa counties. “Nearly 50 percent of Lagawa households reported no food stocks in January 2019 compared to 26 percent in January 2018”, noted [FSMU](#).

Throughout Blue Nile, the general food security outlook is not good, and a very lean season is expected this year, exacerbated by communities not planting in 2018, due to a lack of seeds. Sorghum is already no longer available in Moguf market, which is the only available market for communities continuing to grow in the Hilla Jadid/Khor Hassan area, at least four hours walk from Moguf. People continue to return to this area from nearby Ethiopia, but the area remains isolated due to its poor road conditions and insecurity related to its proximity to the front line.

HEALTH

Dietary constraints and food insecurity continue to drive malnutrition, diseases

The number of malnutrition cases reported to the hospital in Western Jebels was over 50 last month. Watery diarrhea and high numbers of skin infections have also been reported in the last month. Goiter cases continue to be reported in this area, which points to ongoing severe dietary constraints. Reports continue to come in of complicated deliveries in Blue Nile. With no emergency care available complicated pregnancies very often result in the death of the mother or child, often both.

ANIMAL HEALTH

Access to pastures

Access to pastures for livestock is continuously constrained by insecurity. including from cattle raids which create fear in communities. These factors combined with and dry season water shortages work together to disturb not only grazing patterns but also livestock health. No disease outbreak in livestock was reported in March. However, considerable numbers of poultry reportedly died of an unidentified disease in most counties of the Central region of South Kordofan.

WASH

With insufficient water, sources are shared everywhere

The lack of water is a major challenge in all counties in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, with most natural water bodies having dried up. People water their animals around the boreholes and share water sources. It was at a shared water source in Heiban County where an antipersonnel landmine exploded on 20th March¹. A recent mission to the hard-to-access areas of Kau Nyaro and Warni showed the desperate need of communities for safe drinking water. There are no health facilities or schools in this area of South Kordofan.

In Blue Nile, the same challenge persists. Currently, waiting lines of 12 hours or longer are common. Where boreholes don't exist, natural water sources are shared between livestock and people, creating a health risk.

EDUCATION

Schools in session; huge gaps in required materials

The transition rate to secondary school is very low (below 20%) in South Kordofan. Females accounted for 49% in primary schools, 40% in secondary schools and 25% in teacher training institutes. The lower enrolment and retention rates of girls are due to a high demand for their services in household chores, early pregnancies, marriage, and lack of sanitary towels. Schools in both South Kordofan lacks educational materials, trained teachers and textbooks. The need for vocational institutes cannot be underestimated given the high dropout and unemployment rate in the region. In Blue Nile, no secondary school exist, and primary schools are not sufficiently meeting the needs with untrained teachers and insufficient materials. Too many areas only have schools under trees.

SECURITY AND PROTECTION

Military build-up and widespread incidents of cattle raiding

The security situation was fragile in March. Antonov fly-overs have been increasing overall, with sightings every day between March 18 to 22, for instance, again on March 25th and fly-overs across Moguf were heard on March 26 and 27 approaching from the direction of Asosa in Ethiopia.

Sudan Armed Forces military buildup is growing again along the frontlines, especially in Western Jebels and in Blue Nile. This, along with several incidents of cattle raiding, contributes to local insecurity.

On the 5th of March more than 60 huts burned down in a cooking fire incident in Benamo village, Yabus in which 18 households lost everything. This village suffered losses in January in another fire incident in which 8 newly constructed school structures burned down.

¹ See Flash Update 1 the CU released on email on April 4th, 2019

Reported security incidents

| South Kordofan | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 7 March | Unknown gunmen took 7 cows belonging to Jakorlo Hemida of Sarafaya village of Tichi payam, Lagawa county. The suspects are said to be coming from Jangaro in SAF controlled area. |
| 20 March | A landmine accident killed two and injured 3 in Heiban county |
| 23 March | 25 Cattle were taken in a raid from Feresh village in Kumbur Payam. |
| 29 March | Ajuong Thok Market, Pariang: At approximately 2100H, a local trader was reportedly gunned down by an unidentified gunmen. The reason(s) behind the killing remain unknown. |

** The SKBN CU reports according to the information received from a variety of sources. This information does not include a comprehensive verification of perpetrators or damages.*

This monthly update on humanitarian issues in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states is compiled by the SKBN Coordination Unit. With three main functions of information, coordination and advocacy, the SKBNCU strives to put out regular and accurate information on the humanitarian situation of people affected by the conflict since 2011. Please send your comments to coordination@skbncu.org