



COVID-19: Point of entry at Jau, South Kordofan

SKBN Coordination Unit

Humanitarian Update

May 2020

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

COVID-19 containment measures are leading to increased staple food prices

Blue Nile

Cultivation of staple food commodities like sorghum, maize and okra is ongoing across Blue Nile. Plants grown included sorghum, maize, okra, and pumpkins. However, farmers have reported lack of seeds due to the previous poor harvest. In addition, delay of seed distribution has also contributed to lack of seeds. According to the Secretariat of Agriculture, seed distribution is planned after Ramadan.

In May the region has experienced the highest food shortage and hunger compared to any other area under SPLM-N control. Increase in severe hunger was witnessed mainly in Komo Ganza due to the closure of markets as COVID-19 containment measures. As a result, local communities engaged in alternative activities like selling of poles, grass, honey and wild roots locally known as Amjoko in exchange for food. People in the remote area of Komo Ganza need urgent food support to alleviate malnutrition and severe food insecurity for approximately 3700 people.

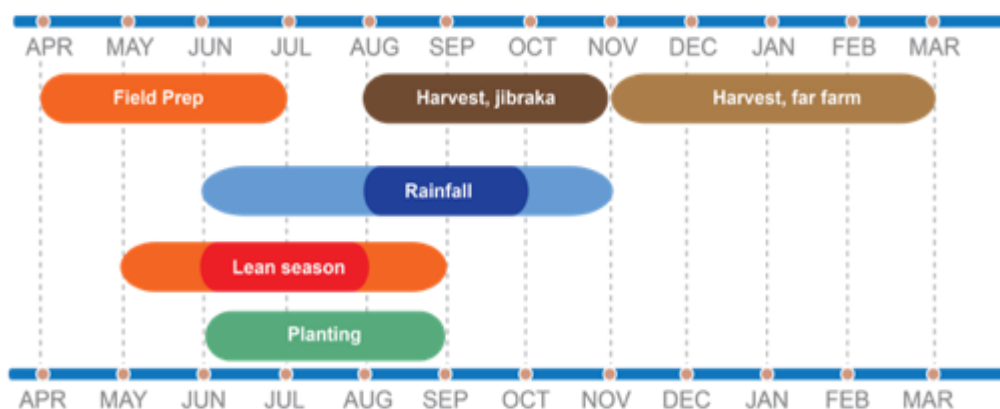
Though cross-border markets resumed with only food and emergency items allowed into the region, prices remained high for households. For instance, in Muguf market, a malwa of white sorghum rose from 60 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) in April to 70 ETB, price of a goat increased from 1500 ETB to 2500 ETB, in Balila, bean price rose from 1400 SSP to 1500 SSP, and in Mayak, a piece of soap rose from 150 SSP to 200 SSP.

South Kordofan

Farmers are busy on both traditional and mechanized farms. A shortage of seeds is also reported in South Kordofan by host communities and returnees alike. Closure of crossline markets and borders as COVID-19 containment measures have a detrimental effect on fuel availability for tractors and getting spare parts for these tractors. Livestock is usually sold for food at markets at this point in the season, but this is not possible with the markets now closed; in Dallami County this is having a severe effect and displacing people to Government-controlled areas in search for food.

Highlights:

- COVID-19: Authorities increase preparedness and response.**
- COVID-19 containment measures are leading to increased food prices**
- COVID-19 risk communication and messaging remain low**
- Closed schools affect over 70,000 learners**
- New clashes in Kadugli and Lagawa County in South Kordofan**



Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and Blue Nile

Western Jebel

Due to COVID-19 mitigation measures, crossline markets closed affecting families here the most as they entirely dependent on markets in this season for their food. Families are unable to sell their livestock thereby increasing the number of people suffering from hunger.

Food prices increased greatly across the region because of the closure of cross-line markets. For example, sesame price rose from 250 SDG to 300 SDG in May, bean price from 250 SDG to 300 SDG, groundnuts from 120 SDG to 150 SDG, salt from 30 SDG to 45 SDG and a piece of soap from 23 SDG to 25 SDG.

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Authorities increase COVID-19 preparedness and response

Local authorities and SoH have come up with measures to contain the spread of the pandemic: schools and mosques closed; ongoing awareness campaigns and messaging; weekly preparedness meetings; establishment of hand washing stations in public places; establishment of a COVID-19 Task Force; establishment of Isolation centres in: a) Alginizia in Um Durain b) Dere, and Kubla in Delami c) Jau, Missiriya and Tiess in Thobo d) Nyakima and Tembera in Heiban, Tumo, Fakara, Shingle and Saada, in Lagawa and f) Kattla hospital in Dilling Counties); soap distribution and restriction of cross-line/ cross-border markets with only food and emergency goods allowed into the Two Areas.

However, as noted in the [FSMU April 2020 Quarterly](#) report, awareness of COVID-19 remains low, with only 30 percent of households having heard about the disease. Furthermore, 72 percent of the population is not aware of any risk mitigation strategies, varying between 78 percent in Central Region, 63 percent in Southern Kurmuk County and 62 percent in Western Jebel Region. Within each region there are, however, more distinct differences. Of the key safety practices promoted, washing hands with soap and running water was the most familiar, with 24 percent of the population aware of its importance. Least familiar was the importance of avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth as much as possible, with only 8 percent of the population aware. Komo Ganza and Heiban stand out as the areas with the lowest levels of awareness overall. With the Two Areas population of about 1.8 Million people, the necessary measures of mainly controlling points of entry and closing of markets is affecting food security severely.

Needs

- Scaling up of risk communication and messaging to reach a large percentage especially in the isolated enclaves of Kua Nyaro/Warni, Abbasiya, Rashad, Amoro Hills and Zosok;
- Strengthening of screening and quarantine facilities at points of entry into the Two Areas;
- Medical devices such as diagnostic tests, ventilators, and personal protective equipment including surgical masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves;
- Improving food availability and temporary shelters for new arrivals quarantined at points of entry and
- Increasing vehicle and fuel supply to conduct awareness.



IEC poster, Blue Nile

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Inadequate drug supply to meet increased demand

Blue Nile

The region registered diseases such as skin infections, acute watery diarrhea, pneumonia (320 cases mainly children), malaria (120 due to the rainy season) and 40 cases of stomach ulcers. Skin diseases were common in Yabus Kubri, Oss, Moguf and Tsunda, Yabus payam, Ishkab in Komo Ganza and Qolnugra in Chali payam due to poor hygiene practices caused by water shortage. The available clinics have reported lack of drugs and due to no EPI and no vaccination has been possible since the beginning of the year.

South Kordofan

Clinics have run out of essential drugs as a result of high migration of returnees, IDPs from Kadugli and people from Government-controlled areas seeking medical services. As a result, the facilities are over whelmed with the demand hence urgent need of drugs and medical supplies. Malaria, cough, eye infection among children, diarrhea and pneumonia have been registered throughout the region.

Data collection on nutrition was not conducted because it involves physical handling of children and due to COVID-19 guidelines, monitors are practicing social distance.

Western Jebel

SoH recorded an increase in cases of malaria, skin infection, pneumonia and bloody diarrhea. A poorly supplied and trained health care system coupled with no drug supply for months is unable to support the population.

WASH***Unsafe drinking water for thousands*****Blue Nile**

Sixteen broken boreholes were repaired as well as more hand-dug wells were created in Balila, Abu Dira, and Soda. Despite the repairs, the available boreholes are not enough for the communities. More boreholes are urgently needed especially in Yabus Bala, Yabus kubri, Yabus Agaba, Berlatuma, and Marinje.

As previously reported few households have latrines. Communities practice open defecation which will result into diseases such as cholera and diarrhea in the rainy season.

South Kordofan

Water scarcity has been witnessed in all localities South Kordofan. The few available water sources are being shared by both livestock and human beings. This poses health risks like water-borne diseases. Hand pump maintenances are ongoing however, there is urgent need for creation of more water points to meet the high demand.

Western Jebel

Lack of water is a challenge for both livestock and humans in the region. For instance, about 500 households in both Sillara and Karko, Dilling County, share one borehole which results into long queues hence a lot of time spent at water points.

ANIMAL HEALTH***Limited access to drugs affects livestock keeping*****Blue Nile**

Cough in livestock was registered mainly in Komo Ganza and Yabus payam. Lack of veterinary drugs and veterinary professionals are among the major challenges facing keeping livestock in Blue Nile region. Vaccination exercises which started last year, urgently needs to continue to safeguard livestock, a vital part of communities' food security.

South Kordofan

With no veterinary drug supply since the beginning of the year and little supply from the cross-line markets stopped due to closure of all the markets, livestock mortality is expected to raise especially when the rainy season sets in.

Western Jebel

No veterinary drug supply has been received since the beginning of the year. Also lack of pasture, cattle rustling and drinking water for livestock is a challenge to livestock farming since they must walk long distances to find water which is also a protection risk because of cattle rustling in the area.

PROTECTION, ACCESS AND SECURITY***Continued increase of movement into the Two Areas*****South Kordofan**

26 & 28 May: A total number of 192 households and 1056 individuals (70 in Um Durain County, 84 in Thobo and 38 in Western Kadugli) were displaced in Kadugli, as a result of clashes between the communities and armed Missiriya. They are in need of food, temporary shelters, water containers and cooking utensils.

In addition, it has been reported that some of the IDPs are not going through the right check points, hence not being checked for any COVID-19 related symptoms, but SRRA through the local authority are working on how best to handle the issue.

Western Jebel

26 May: One person was killed in Ladi village, Lagawa County allegedly by armed Missiriya

26 May: 25 heads of cattle were raided from Karlanya village, Tulisi Payam,

28 May: There were clashes by Missiriya in Karlanya village, Tulisi payamijj

09 June: Looting by Missiriya was reported in Umkawisha and Tarien villages, Lagawa County



Displaced women at Kutang Check Point, Um Durain County

The SKBN CU reports security incidents 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 advocacy@skbncu.org

