

# SKBN Coordination Unit Humanitarian Update

February 2019

## FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

### *Rising food insecurity due to food scarcity and growing prices*

The main harvest in monitored areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile under (SPLM/A-N) control is ongoing, however the production is below expectations. As availability is limited, food prices in the markets are rising above average. Sorghum prices increased the most from 35 SDG in December to 60 SDG in January in Western Jebels, where maize and wheat are still not available in the markets.

Food insecurity is affected also by the situation in the rest of the country. According to [FewsNet January](#) update on Sudan, prices of sorghum and millet have continued to increase in December and January, which is atypical of the harvesting period (sorghum and millet prices are on average 150 per cent above last year and over 270 per cent above the five-year average). This is due to the delayed harvest in semi-mechanized sorghum-producing areas, economic policies and austerity measures announced by the Government of Sudan in early 2018 as well as currency depreciation (with a national inflation rate of 73 per cent and a food inflation rate of 87 per cent)<sup>1</sup> and the impacts of macroeconomic conditions on the cost of production and transportation.

Food prices are expected to further rise in 2019 in Sudan and food access among poor household will be much lower than normal during the 2019 lean season when poor households are reliant on markets to access food. As a result, food security is expected to deteriorate in SPLM/A-N areas as well. While all markets are functioning in the monitored areas of Blue Nile, the harvest in Wadaka and Komo Ganza localities are concerning, with very poor levels recorded by Coordination Unit (CU) monitors. Farmers did not produce enough food from their own farms last year because of the erratic rainfall and lack of seeds.



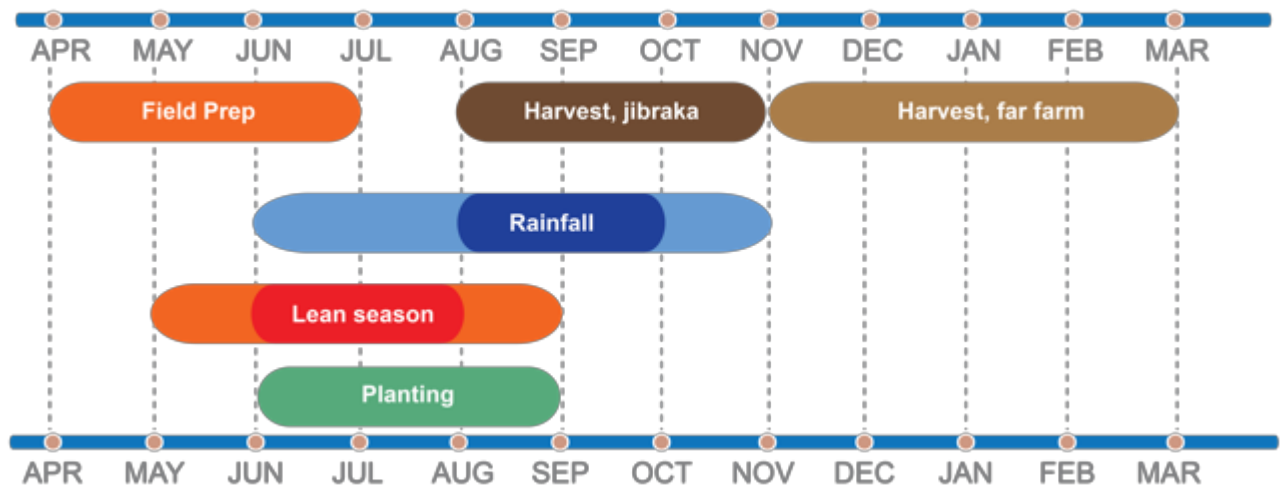
**Vulnerable communities' access to food reduces and need of urgent assistance**

**Malnutrition levels rise in Western Jebels: 65 children at risk**

**Widespread livestock diseases and cattle raids threaten livelihood and increases fear**

**Military build-up along frontlines affects security of civilians**

<sup>1</sup> Sudan's Central Bureau of Statistics as of December 2018. Report released on 11 Feb that inflation rate dropped to 43.5%.



*Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and Blue Nile*

According to CU monitors, communities in Wadaka and Koma Ganza areas depend solely on collecting wild roots and fruits, and households can spend about two to three days without any food to eat. Communities in Koma Ganza have no access to functioning markets in their payam.

With only a few weeks left of the main harvest season in South Kordofan, the poor harvest, as reported previously, continues in Thobo county and Western Kadugli, where sorghum prices started to rise already.

This fragile humanitarian situation urgently requires a broader approach to address the food security situation in Blue Nile and South Kordofan.

The vulnerability of communities has increased due to the economic decline, and the [risk factor for humanitarian disaster](#) is going up.



*Wild fruits are the only available food in Komo-Ganza in January 2019.*

## HEALTH

### *Malnutrition levels rise in Western Jebels*

High malnutrition figures continued to be reported from the Western Jebels area of South Kordofan. Overall, 65 cases of children at risk of malnutrition were recorded in the health facilities in January; 13 severely acute (SAM) and 53 moderately acute (MAM). That is directly linked to the food insecurity in this monitored region.

In the Central region of South Kordofan, several acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) cases were recorded in Umdorein County early January, with cases rising now in Buram County. Cases were also reported in Yida refugee camp (South Sudan) and monitoring is ongoing. This again is an indicator of the poor water and sanitation situation in South Kordofan and in Yida, coupled with the presence of dust during the dry season.

A possible case of guinea worm has been reported from Darsumma, in Komo Ganza payam, in Blue Nile and is currently being followed up.

## ANIMAL HEALTH

### *Diseases leaves hundreds of cattle dead*

It's been confirmed that over 200 cattle died in Habila and Dilling counties Western Jebels so far, due to a disease locally known as *umzugalla*. This region is especially vulnerable to diseases as it is locked in geographically with migration routes running through its territory.

In Blue Nile, diseases continue to lead to cattle deaths and tsetse fly is reportedly a widespread problem beyond Komo Ganza as in previous years.

In both regions, cattle are an important source of income for the families. The loss of this asset, coupled with poor harvests, will likely impact negatively on the food security.

## WASH

### *Improved sanitation needed*

No drilling has taken place in the monitored areas for several years and the maintenance of the water infrastructure is lagging. Continued awareness raising is needed among these communities to encourage health seeking behavior and bring down the prevalence of water-borne diseases. Most of the communities in the areas do not make use of latrines and open defecation is still a widespread practice.

Many communities along the Yabus river in Blue Nile are still using water direct from the river for drinking. Drinking contaminated water can cause a series of severe water-borne diseases, including guinea worm.

## EDUCATION

### *Use of multiples curricula and lack of teachers affects education*

Primary and secondary schools in South Kordofan and Western Jebels are in session. In Blue Nile, some schools opened late and new schools are planned to open in each of the regularly monitored areas. However, the use of the curriculum remains problematic, as both East African and South Sudanese curricula are used depending on teachers and textbooks. That affects the possibility to develop the education sector more organically.

Chali and Wadaga have the lowest pupil enrolment in Blue Nile and retention rate is low. The lack of volunteer teachers is the biggest challenge in the area.

Isolated and scattered settlement of communities in Komo Ganza contributes to the low literacy rate seen in this locality.

## SECURITY AND PROTECTION

### *Widespread incidents of cattle raiding*

Renewed military build-up has been observed along the border line between SPLM/A-N and Government controlled areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, and more localized insecurity along the frontlines have been reported especially in South Kordofan.

Some traders from Dilling town were stopped by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and all their goods and the means of transport were taken, including eight donkey carts and the items transported, which had an estimated value of 200,000 SDG, or around \$3800.

Meanwhile, multiple incidents of cattle raiding, allegedly conducted by militias associated to SAF, were reported in the Central region and Western Jebels in January. As a result, over 100 goats and over 100 cows were looted, while one farmer was injured and abducted. These incursions come at a time when some communities started selling livestock to buy food. Cattle raiding not only leaves communities in constant fear of attacks, but it also reduces livelihood opportunities and buying power of vulnerable communities and it leads to adjusted coping mechanisms for grazing and water access. While widespread demonstrations continued in government-controlled areas of Sudan, with the biggest volume reported in the week of 21-28 January, demonstrations were also reported in both SPLM/A-N areas, in support of Sudanese citizens.

Date	Incident
17 January	37 goats were looted by militias in Tollabi payam, Thobo County
18 January	Militias attacked a village in Dabackaia Kaga Payam, Thobo County, in an attempt to raid cattle. As a result, one farmer was wounded and abducted reportedly to Kailak (West Kordofan).
22 January	Cattle raiders allegedly supported by SAF troops moved from Al-kuwak and Barno (SAF base) and attacked Kabuk village of Kattla payam, Dilling County. 72 cows were looted.

**23 January** Militias looted 34 cows and 27 goats in Western Kadugli.

**25 January** Pastoralists, reportedly Fellata, attempted to raid cattle in Belatuma (Blue Nile).

*\* 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](mailto:coordination@skbncu.org)*