

SKBN Coordination Unit

Humanitarian Update

January 2020



SPLM-N faction leader Abdelaziz Al Hilu and Sudan's Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok hold their hands in Kauda, as WFP chief David Beasley looks on.

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Blue Nile

Overall food security improved across Blue Nile because of the main harvest in far farms. White sorghum, in particular, has improved food security in Blue Nile. Other crops such as beans, ground nuts and sesame (sim sim) were also harvested. In Wadaka payam, where a food shortage was previously reported because of floods in the earlier months of 2019, food security has improved as well, with 2700 households receiving food aid.

Despite food security improvement, the Secretariat of Agriculture (SoA) confirmed poor harvests resulting from floods, pests and diseases that caused significant damage to crops. It has been reported that food stocks may not last until April.

As the dry season commences, communities resort to alternative means to generate income. Gold mining continues in Wadaka and Yabus payams, fishing by hooks is also ongoing in Komo Ganza and Yabus payams, while selling of grass, poles and charcoal occurs frequently in Chali and Yabus.

South Kordofan

Far farm harvesting is ongoing and some communities are already threshing their harvest. However, poor yields been experienced in Dellami and Thobo B Counties due to heavy rainfall and flooding encountered last year. Although reports show that most people are currently food secure, large numbers of returnees from both Sudan and South Sudan will strain the limited available food stocks, thereby creating a huge food gap.

Western Jebels

Reports suggest that the harvest was generally poor in Al-Sonut, parts of Dilling, and Habilla due to floods in late 2019. Populations will need food support by the end of March, because available food stocks are now being shared with returnees.

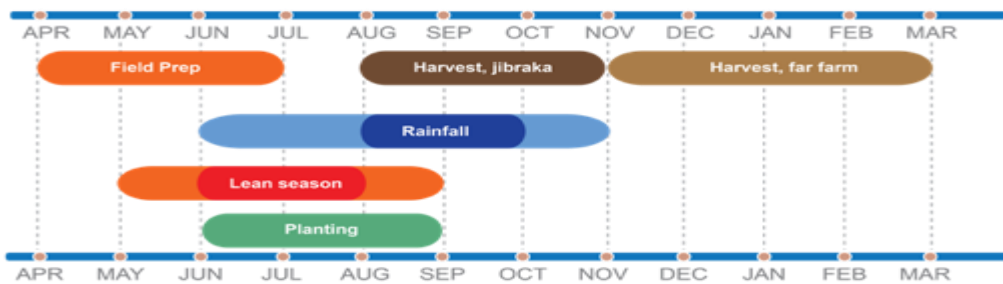
Highlights:

**Markets remain functional:
high prices reported**

**Food security improves
through January, but not
enough to offset losses**

**Dr. Abdullah Hamdok's
historic visit to Kauda, South
Kordofan**

**Increased migration:
Inadequate drug supply to
meet increased need**



Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and Blue Nile

Blue Nile

As of January, markets were not fully functional, with staple prices remaining high and only a small number of South Sudanese and local traders participating. Prices vary throughout the region but are relatively very high, creating an untenable situation for people. Without access to cash to encourage trade within the region, it is unlikely food will enter local markets in sufficient quantities. Maize and red sorghum were not available in the markets except white sorghum (white sorghum is the main cereal harvested from far farms). Following trends were observed; in January, the price of coffee in Balila market (Wadaka payam) rose from 1000 SSP in December to 1200 SSP in January. In Mayak market, a kilo of onions rose from 600 SSP in December to 800 SSP in January. In Balila market a price of a cow increased from 30,000 SSP to 70,000 SSP. The reason behind the increase in prices of cattle is that Fellata nomads who are the source of cattle moved far south to Komo Ganza and Yabus, creating scarcity in Wadaka payam. Continued monitoring of Wadaka payam is recommended.

South Kordofan

Prices of food commodities and animals in local markets in South Kordofan are increasing due to high inflation in the country. For instance, sorghum per malwa (a local measure) in Heiban rose from 200 SSP in December to 500 SSP in January, whereas in Western Kadugli a malwa of cowpeas rose from 100 SDG in December to 120 SDG in January.

Western Jebels

Basic commodities are available in the market, but prices are high. For example, a malwa of sim increased from 150 SDG in December to 180 SDG in January, groundnuts rose from 30 SDG in December to 45 SDG in January and a kilo of sorghum rose from 50 SDG in December to 70 SDG in January.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Blue Nile

The health sector in Blue Nile is extremely fragile, and there is need for both emergency and long-term interventions. Malaria is reported; 49 cases of adults and 76 under-fives years were registered. In Komo Ganza payam, cases of leprosy and night blindness were registered. Health care in Blue Nile, where needs are high, is highly limited.

With the drugs donated by WHO, the Secretariat of Health plans to distribute them to the most vulnerable communities of Tukabele and Dereng in Komo Ganza, Khor Hassan/Hilla Jadid in Yabus and Jindi, Bee and Anyile in Chali.

South Kordofan

Local clinics have reported being overwhelmed by cases of malaria, diarrhea and vomiting in children across South Kordofan. Access to trained medical staff and drug supply is highly limited for the population. Communities are walking long distances in search of medical care. Two miscarriages have also been reported in Thobo County. More medical capacity is sorely needed to address the needs of nearly a million people in SPLM-N areas of South Kordofan.

Western Jebels

The area needs more support in the health sector. Health facilities lack drug supplies. Health cadres were trained, but lack logistical support to carry out their work. This makes communities very vulnerable to the sudden onset of diseases.

WASH

Blue Nile

Some 600 households received WASH NFIs in Wadaka payam. Also, construction of latrines in PHCs and drilling of two boreholes are ongoing, but there are reports of further broken boreholes in Belatuma. Access to clean water is urgently needed to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases.

South Kordofan

Lack of access to clean water remains a significant issue. Parts of Heiban County have no access to clean water. Currently, the only available water are hand dug wells which will dry up soon (March-June) posing a threat to the communities. With drinkable water scarce, water-borne illnesses threaten people, who also lack adequate health care. More NFIs to those communities whose houses were destroyed during the heavy rain and floods, and returnees are urgently needed.

Meanwhile, Thobo A County is experiencing a rapid influx of returnees, in areas with no access to humanitarian relief, lack of shelter and scarcity of drinkable water sources. The situation is particularly concerning, and WASH needs are high in the area. People are now depending on contaminated streams and dug wells. Support is urgently needed to step up humanitarian assistance.

EDUCATION

Blue Nile

Education in Blue Nile is a challenge: communities struggle to keep schools functioning and this requires urgent intervention.. While some schools are functioning, through community effort, scholastic materials, qualified teachers and teachers' incentives are lacking. Overall education sector in the region needs massive long term and quality support to sustain current communities' effort to keep the schools running. 5000 exercise books were donated to the Secretariat of Education by the Maban Education Bureau, although this quantity falls far short of demand when one considers the number of schools available in the region.

On the other hand, ten scholarships to start secondary education at Yusef Kuwa College in South Kordofan were offered to students in Blue Nile who had received a pass mark. However, the Secretariat of Education in Blue Nile was unable to identify any qualifying candidates, given the poor quality of education in the state.

During the Education Workshop held on November 4 - 5 2019, it was unanimously agreed that the South Sudanese curriculum should be the only curriculum used in the region.

South Kordofan

Although the quality of education in South Kordofan is above that of other regions under the SPLM-N, the education sector continues to face challenges; for instance, transportation of candidates to examination centers, teacher incentives and other scholastic materials are lacking. Out of 268 schools, only 53 are being supported same with the secondary sector; out of 14 secondary schools in the area only 9 are receiving support.

Western Jebels

Primary schools resumed after New Year and Christmas holidays. Last year 345 candidates managed to sit for the South Sudan Primary Education Certificate Exams. However, the education sector in the region faces several challenges; for instance, the only Teachers Training Institute (the Yousif Kua facility, which had registered a total of 65 male and female students) finds it hard to remain open due to the shortages of trained staff and scholastic materials.

ANIMAL HEALTH

Blue Nile

Cases of diarrhea, cough, pneumonia and toe-fungus attacking goats and sheep were registered in the region. Without access to drugs, these diseases could affect thousands of animals. Since water sources for livestock are also drying up as such, more water points are badly needed.

South Kordofan

The Secretariat of Health(SoH) continues to report lack of livestock drugs since 2019. Without access to vaccines, many livestock and thus livelihoods could be affected. Intervention in this sector is crucially needed.

Western Jebels

There are reports of various dangerous skin diseases (umzagalla, abugenate and abulissan) that affecting the tongues and hooves of calves. These diseases are transported from mother to calf during breastfeeding. Without access to veterinary drugs, these diseases could affect thousands of cattle. Cattle rustling is also another challenge to livestock keeping in Western Jebels.

PROTECTION, ACCESS AND SECURITY

A case of child abuse by a parent was reported in Chali payam. Investigations are ongoing.

There are reports of high numbers of South Sudanese refugees moving from Ethiopia through Blue Nile to South Sudan, possibly because of improved security.

In Habila County, local sources reported increased access to markets on the borders of SPLM/N-controlled area because overall security in the area has improved. The increased access to these markets indicates that, as conflict decreases, trade in the areas will increase.

On 9 January, Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok visited Kauda in the South Kordofan on, the first senior Khartoum official to travel there since clashes resumed in the area more than eight years ago.

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

