

# SKBN Coordination Unit

## Humanitarian Update

December 2020



A woman reading a Covid-19 poster in Chali payam, Blue Nile, Nov 2020

### FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

*Staple food prices continued to increase in December*

#### Blue Nile

Jibraka harvests are completed, while harvests on far farms will commence in January 2021. Although the harvest in October improved household food access, the number of people facing food insecurity remained high compared to the same time last year. As a result, poor households are likely to have below-average food stocks next year, reportedly due to lower crop yields coupled with high food prices, which limited their purchasing power. In Wadaka and Yabus payams, for example, less than 25 per cent of households have food stock left. This indicates that more than 70 per cent of households depended on market purchases. In this respect, high prices for sorghum are affecting the purchasing power of a consistent number of household. Moreover, long-term sorghum performance from far farms was also reportedly poor due to the delay of rains and pest infestation. The area will need food assistance next year.

Markets were fully functional with goods from Ethiopia in cross-line markets of Yabus Bala, Moguf, Balila and Mayak despite the clashes in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Retail prices of locally produced staples remained stable but high for sorghum in December compared to the same time last year.

Livestock prices had mixed trends across most markets in December 2020. Cattle prices slightly declined (1 per cent) in Wadaka due to the presence of Fallata nomads but remained high in Yabus.

#### Highlights

Covid-19 awareness campaigns continue in the Two Areas

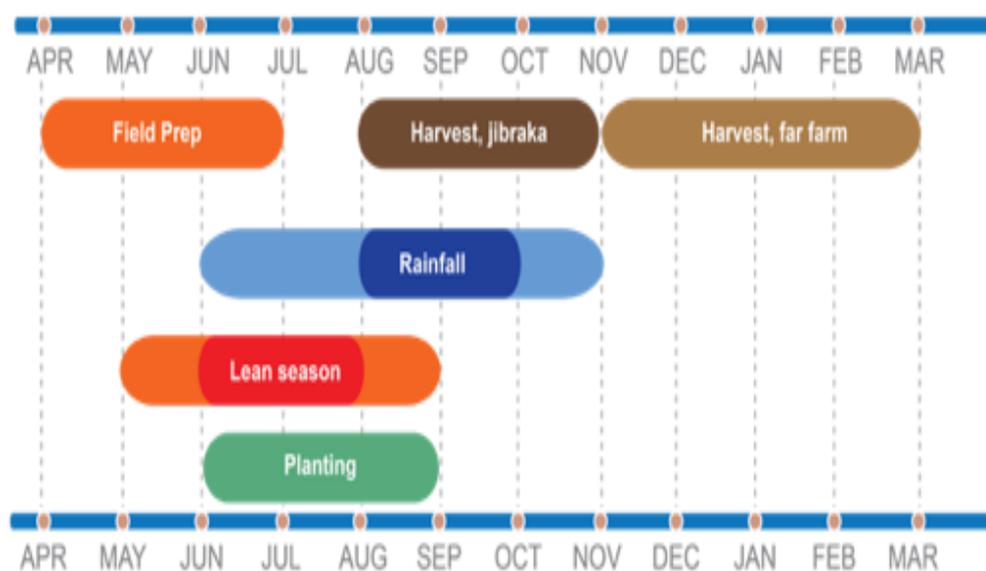
Ongoing harvest of 2020/2021 season continues but with poor crop yields

Staple food prices continued to increase

## **South Kordofan**

Harvesting of long-duration sorghum, cowpeas, and sesame is fully underway in all far farms of the central region. However, the primary findings show very low crop yield due to a shortage of rainfall. Food access from own production has improved, but it has been projected a worsening starting from March 2021 due to a poor harvest.

Food commodities (wheat flour, onions, and cooking oil) were available in the market, but prices remained high due to the current inflation in Sudan.



*Seasonal calendar for South Kordofan and the Blue Nile*

## COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

### *Awareness continues in the Two Areas*

Although there have been no officially confirmed COVID-19 cases registered in the Two Areas, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA) and Secretariat of Health (SOH) continue to work closely with partners in COVID-19 response operation across the region. COVID-19 supplies (soap, masks, hand washing stations, tents, mattresses, posters) were distributed to schools, markets, churches, and mosques, among other locations.

### **NEEDS:**

#### **Identified needs and gaps in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Two Areas include:**

- Scaling up of risk communication and messaging to reach a wider coverage even the isolated areas of Kau, Nyaro, and Warni
- Increase soap, hand washing facilities, and increased water supply in public settings
- Medical devices such as diagnostic tests, ventilators, and personal protective equipment including surgical masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves
- Increasing vehicle and fuel supply to conduct awareness in the Two Areas
- Improve levels of medicines and medical supplies stocks in the SPLM-N controlled areas;
- More funding in the Health and WASH sector across the region to meet the huge existing gaps.

## EDUCATION

### *Education remains a challenge in the Two Areas*

#### **Blue Nile**

Education in the Blue Nile continues to face challenges. The **47** primary schools existing in the area coupled with a lack of qualified teachers, teacher incentives, learning materials, and low enrollment of girls. Most of the schools are community-owned, and parents struggle to keep them running. WFP and partners continue to support school feeding in the region.

#### **South Kordofan**

There is a total of **272** primary (**41,568 boys and 37,534 girls**) and **8** secondary schools in both South Kordofan and Western Jebel, are in need of learning materials, teachers' incentives, and qualified teachers.

#### **Western Jebel**

A total of **20,895 (10,945 boys and 9,950 girls)** pupils are enrolled in **25** primary schools, while a total of **865 (346 females and 519 males)** students are enrolled in **3** secondary schools. The area registered **364** candidates for the South Sudan Primary Education Certificate, while **44** were registered for the South Sudan Secondary Education Certificate.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

## *Lack of essential medicines in the Two Areas*

### **Blue Nile**

Primary Health Centers registered inadequate drugs for malaria treatment and antibiotics. The state of emergency care also remains a challenge due to funding gaps. Malaria, skin diseases, Lower Respiratory Tract Infection (LRTI)/Pneumonia, Pelvic Upper Diseases (PUD)/stomach Ulcer, Allergic reactions, and UTIs were reported in December 2020.

### **Western Jebels**

**2,192** malaria and **2,754** Upper Respiratory Infection cases were reported in December 2020 across the region (Dilling, Lagawa, Habilla, and Al Sunot counties).

## **WASH**

### *Unsafe drinking water for thousands in the Two Areas*

#### **Blue Nile**

Communities in Abdira and parts of Balila in Wadaka payam, Hillat Jadid, and Aqontayo/Benamo in Yabus continue to depend on unsafe water. Out of **205** boreholes, **130** (including 35 repaired in December) are functional. Waiting lines of over 3 hours are common. Where boreholes do not exist at all, natural water sources are shared between livestock and people, creating a health risk. On the other hand, only **500** out of **35,312** households have access to proper sanitation across the Blue Nile, while the majority of households practice open defecation posing grave public health risks to the transmission of diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid. There is need to scale up funding to improve water, sanitation and hygiene.

#### **South Kordofan**

A total number of **36** boreholes in Um Durain County need an urgent repair to improve water availability.

#### **Western Jebel**

A total of only **133** hand pumps are functioning, while **154** broke down. Also, **39** water yards need urgent repair for human and livestock consumption.

## **ANIMAL HEALTH**

### *Limited access to veterinary medicine*

#### **Blue Nile**

There are existing gaps in veterinary drug supply and no vaccination has been conducted since the beginning of the year and the available drugs in the markets are expensive for communities resulting in livestock mortality. Besides, the lack of adequately trained human resources and water points for livestock is a challenge hence herders must trek long distances to find water and pastures, thus creating conflicts over the access right to these lands. A high mobility rate affects the health of livestock and sometimes leads to cattle rustling. Diarrhea, cough, contagious Bovine pleuropneumonia were the most infectious livestock diseases threatening the production of livestock in the Blue Nile leading to an increased mortality rate.

#### **South Kordofan**

Cases of malignant pustule, anthrax, pulmonary pustule diarrhea, and hoof and mouth disease were reported in Delami, Heiban, Um Durain, and Thobo counties. According to the Secretariat of Animal Health, **22** heads of cattle died in December 2020.

## PROTECTION, ACCESS AND SECURITY

In December 2020 there were clashes between Falatta nomads and Beeh farmers in Chali payam over the destruction of farms resulting into the death of **30** goats belonging to the Falatta.

*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.  
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