

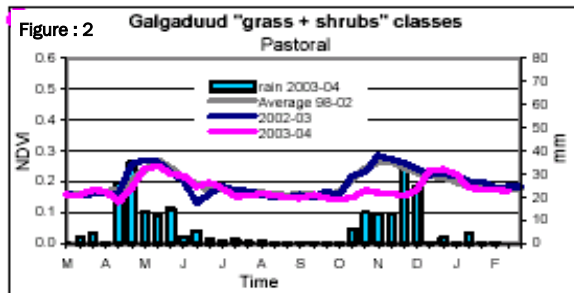
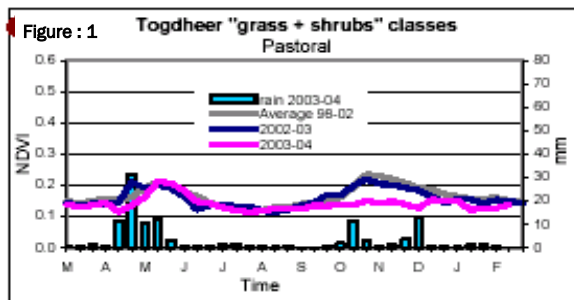
Food Security Highlights

- **Update on extent of pastoral crises in Northern and Central Somalia :** An estimated 95,000 pastoralists (10% of the area's population) are currently facing a "Humanitarian Emergency", with another 123,000 in a "Livelihood Crisis" (13% of area's population). Emergency interventions are ongoing but significant targeting gaps exist. This recent analysis represents an expansion in area affected and numbers of vulnerable people from the analysis presented in the recent FSAU/FEWS-Net Flash, issued February 25 2004. Page 2-3.
- **Early Warning. :** If the *Gu* Rains fail (April-June), the situation will escalate to a large scale humanitarian emergency in severity and magnitude. Page 2.
- **Gu Climate Forecast. :** The thirteenth Climate Forum forecasts slight probabilities of normal to above normal *Gu* rainfall for Northern Somalia and normal to below normal rainfall for Central and Southern Somalia. Page 1.
- **Deyr Harvest Results :** Total cereal production in Southern Somalia is normal for the 2003/04 Deyr Harvest, except for localized failures and losses in Bakol, Hiran, and Lower Juba. High sorghum prices in Bakol, Hiran and Gedo are creating food access problems for the poor. Page 4 and 5.
- **Concern for High Mortality in Juba Valley :** MSF-H studies confirm malnutrition is the leading cause of the alarmingly high mortality rates among Marere in Juba Valley. Chronic and seasonal food insecurity responsible for inadequate food intake and malnutrition. Page 7.
- **Bossaso Livestock Exports.** Livestock exports from Bossaso Port have improved, despite the prolonged drought in northern and central Somalia. Since 2001, livestock exports through Bossaso Port have increased dramatically and in 2003 accounted for 70% of total exports of 2.2 million. Page 5.

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Poor Vegetation Growth in North and Central Pastoral Areas Confirmed by NDVI

In the northern and central pastoral areas, drought compromised vegetation growth during the second part of 2003. Almost no vegetation activity is visible in the pastoral areas of Togdheer and Galgaduud, and current levels are far below average. See Figures 1 and 2, below.

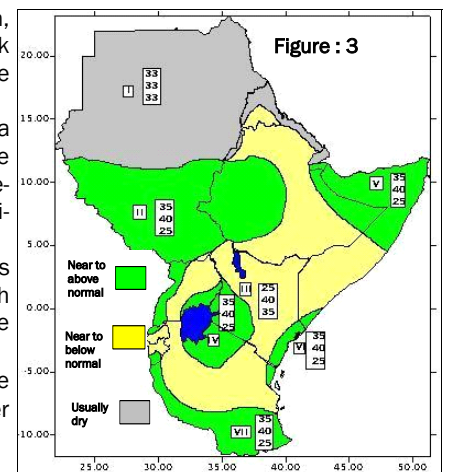


Source: MARS-JRC, Monitoring agricultural vegetation in Somalia using SPOT Vegetation Index, AFRICOVER and ECMWF Global Meteorological Modelling



The Thirteenth Climate Outlook for the Greater Horn of Africa

- Climate scientists from the Greater Horn of Africa gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, for the Thirteenth Climate Outlook Forum from 25-27 February 2004.
- Their aim was to reach agreement on the climate outlook for March to May 2004 in the East African sub-region. This time period corresponds to the beginning of the *Gu* rainy season in Somalia, when 70-75% of Somalia's crops are planted. A significant reduction in rainfall levels during this time has serious consequences for livestock and crop production. The principal factor used to make the projections is Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) in the tropical Pacific Ocean and over much of the tropical Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Additional factors affecting climate in the sub-region are also considered.
- After three days of discussions, a seasonal forecast was made, consisting of probability distributions, which indicate the likelihood of below-normal, near-normal or above-normal rainfall in the region.
- As seen in Figure 3, the forecast for Somalia divided the country into two zones. In the central and southern parts of Somalia bordering Kenya and Ethiopia, there is a slight probability of normal to below normal rainfall in the coming months (March-May). In those areas where Deyr rainfall was very poor, including Hiran, Bakol and parts of Bay Region, livestock and agriculture conditions may be further undermined.
- In Northern Somalia there is a slight probability of normal to above normal rainfall, which would be especially beneficial for those areas experiencing long term drought.
- Juba Valley and Shabelle Regions may experience flooding due to the high probability of increased rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands.
- FSAU and FEWS-Net will continue to monitor rainfall patterns closely over the coming months.



FSAU's Key Funding Agencies :



United States Agency for International Development



FEWS



It is estimated that 95,000 pastoralists (10% of population in affected districts) are currently in a Humanitarian Emergency, with another 123,000 in a Livelihood Crisis (13% of population in affected districts). Needs are estimated through June to coincide with the completion of the next rainy season.

EARLY WARNING SCENARIOS FOR GU RAINS

- If the *Gu* rains fail (April -June), this update serves as an early warning for a major humanitarian emergency in severity and magnitude throughout Northern and Central Somalia that would require major humanitarian interventions.
- If the next rains do not fail, but are limited in coverage, interventions would still be required given the severity of the current situation, and might include animal trucking, livestock off-take schemes, and other livelihood support.
- Even if the *Gu* rains are normal, pastoral livelihoods have been so weakened that interventions will still be required. One possible intervention that should be given consideration is the emergency re-stocking pack animals. With up to 80% loss of pack animals, even with good *Gu* rains, many households will be unable to return to their areas or migrate to areas where there is improved pasture and water. Other interventions to consider are the supply of emergency provision of plastic sheeting for shelters for the weak livestock, as rains can lead to high rates of mortality for weak and emancipated livestock.
- Regardless of the outcome of the *Gu*, pastoralist livelihoods are on a new trajectory for the foreseeable future and further in depth analysis is required to better understand the changes occurring within the pastoral system.

Figure 7: Map Showing Livestock Locations in Northern and Central Somalia (March 2004)

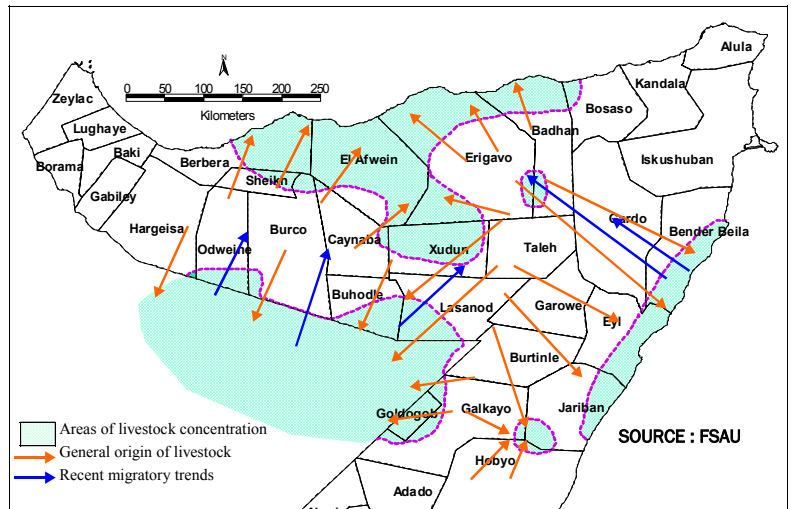
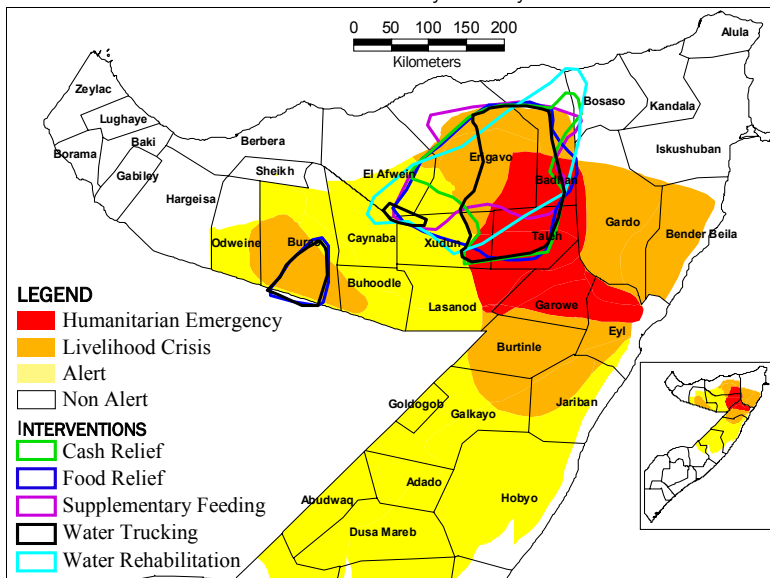


Figure 6 : Overall Humanitarian Response vs. Estimated Areas in Need (Responses as of February 2004)

Source: UN-OCHA. Information current as of early February 2004.



Interventions in Northern Somalia

- As part of the coordination process and with the aim to avoid duplication and to identify gaps in humanitarian response, UN-OCHA has collated data on current responses in northern and central Somalia and combined this information with FSAU estimates of affected populations (see FSAU FLASH issued February 25, 2004).
- This analysis clearly shows significant gaps in the targeting of assistance as compared with the most recent needs analysis.
- In its draft of the response matrix, OCHA highlights that in addition to the emergency food aid and cash response, a number of other interventions are planned or being carried out, including water rehabilitation (shallow wells, *berked*s, *balley*s and boreholes), subsidization of water trucking, cash for work, and livestock interventions (off-take and veterinary services, de-stocking, fodder and medicine distribution).

Update on Food Security in Central Regions

While current information is still limited, concern is mounting about people's food security and livelihoods in the Central Region of Somalia (Galgadud and Mudug Districts). The FSAU's understanding of the situation, as reported by its field monitors in the area is summarized below. For more information see Regional Highlights.

North Central Region (North Mudug and South Nugal)

- The food security situation is deteriorating for poor households in Jariban and parts of Burtinle Districts in south Nugal and North Mudug due to unexpectedly high expenditures on water and transport (to save livestock and assets) and decreased livestock income brought about as pasture and water sources diminish.
- The condition of livestock concentrated in the coast areas and eastern Jariban is mixed, depending on the origin. Livestock that migrated from Nugal Valley are in very poor condition, with very high mortality rates, no conception, minimal milk production, high mortality rate in pack camels and few saleable livestock. These pastoralists are in a desperate situation, having depleted assets and most of their coping

mechanisms. Livestock from Eastern *Hawd* are in mixed condition. The biggest problem pastoralists face is exorbitant water prices with weak or no pack camels to carry the water. Water sources are depleted and huge increases in water prices have limited access for many people. Water trucking and increased water prices occurred earlier than expected. Boreholes are mostly nonfunctional and the few operating are unlikely to sustain the increasing water requirements for both human and livestock consumption.

South Central Region (Galgadud)

- In Galgadud Region, the overall pastoral food security situation remains fairly normal, however, reports of increasing insecurity are raising concerns. In conflict areas (Herafe, parts of El-bur and eastern part of Addun of Galgadud), massive displacement and un-predicted livestock migrations have taken place.
- Clan conflicts have erupted in the eastern part of Addun over the ownership of an area marked for *berked* construction. Continued clan conflicts could erode existing coping strategies and further undermine the fragile food security situation of poor households.

2003/04 Deyr Cereal Harvest Southern Regions of Somalia

Introduction

Fieldwork for the Deyr 2003/04 harvest assessment in southern Somalia was carried out between 15-29 February. FSAU field monitors gathered information on Deyr crop harvest production and analysed results at a workshop from 5-8 March. A summary of the main findings follows.

Rainfall

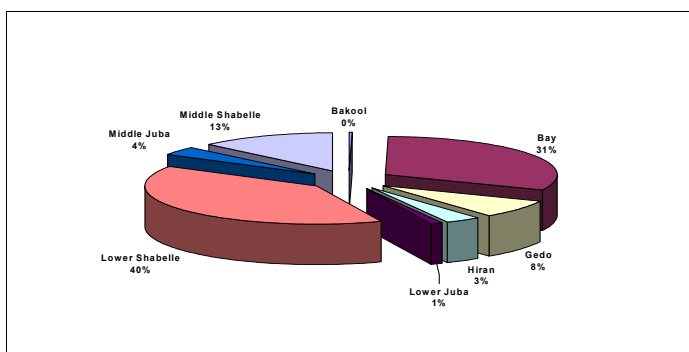
Delayed onset of rainfall was the main abnormal feature of the 2003/04 Deyr. Rainfall was irregular in terms of rainfall coverage and distribution over time and space. Useful rainfall started in the third dekad (10-day period) of October 2003 in parts of Bay region (Qansaxdhere and Diinsoor), Middle Juba (Sakow) and Gedo (southern districts). Elsewhere, rainfall generally started in the second dekad of November. The worst affected regions in terms of rainfall distribution and coverage were : Bakol, Hiran, Lower Juba, Middle Shabelle and northern districts of Gedo.

Cereal Production

In total, the 2003/04 Deyr was normal in terms of cereal production. The reason is mainly attributed to existing infrastructure in Lower and Middle Shabelle for irrigated maize. Moreover, good rainfall encouraged farmers in Bay region to plant new sorghum instead of relying on traditional Deyr-ratoon cropping (lower-yielding, second-generation off-shoots from the previous Gu season sorghum).

An estimated area of 284,450 Ha of cereal (67% sorghum and 33% maize) has been harvested in eight regions of southern Somalia. The combined cereal production is estimated at 102,000 MT (53% sorghum and 47% maize) which is close to the post-war (1995-2002) Deyr season average. See Table 3 below. Cereal production fell below the Deyr-2001 and Deyr-2002 by 28% and 41%, respectively.

Figure 8 : Regional Contribution to the total 2003/04 Deyr Cereal Production of Southern Somalia.



FSAU estimated the Deyr 2003 crop production figure to be around 147,000 MT at establishment, however, the final harvest was reduced for the following reasons.

Factors that affected sorghum production:

- Rainfall of the 2003/04 Deyr was sufficient for sorghum growth and development in localized areas. Most sorghum, however, suffered moisture stress that consequently caused yields to decline.
- Heavy winds at the sorghum development stage exacerbated prevailing moisture stress, hence affecting sorghum yields.
- Insecurity also contributed to low production of sorghum in parts of Bay and Middle Juba regions.

Factors that affected maize production:

- Rain-dependent maize failed to reach development and grain filling stages (although this yielded high value fodder for cattle).
- Irrigated maize suffered moisture stress due to the drop in river levels for gravity irrigation and expensive diesel for pump irrigated maize.
- Stalk-borers (insects) contributed to yield reduction of maize.

The delay of the 2003/04 Deyr encouraged production of sesame in both irrigated and rain fed areas. Production of sesame will certainly adjust the cereal of the 2003/04 Deyr in terms of cash income. The web-worm and moisture stress affected rain fed sesame more than irrigated sesame.

High Sorghum Prices in Bakol, Hiran and Gedo

High sorghum prices, on average 49% higher than last year (see Sorghum Belt Prices and Trends article on the next page) are creating access problems for the poor agro-pastoral food economy groups (FEGs) of Bakol, Hiran and Gedo. Aid Agencies (ACF, World Vision, and MSF) are already detecting high malnutrition rates in the five districts of Bakol, the three districts of Hiran and northern districts of Gedo region.

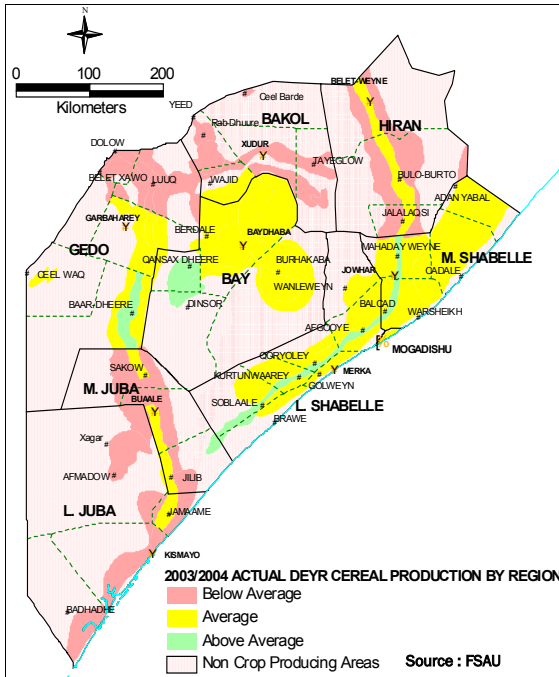
Bay region is the main sorghum supplier of Bakol, Hiran and Gedo and currently there are large stocks of sorghum at Bay farmers' disposal. Sorghum prices in Bay region are reasonable (40-45,000 Ssh/50-kg sack). Roadblocks for extorting illegal taxes, however, are pushing up sorghum prices in Bakol, Hiran and Gedo regions. FFW projects by CARE and WFP are mitigating the negative effects of high sorghum prices in the drought affected areas by lowering prices from 150,000 Ssh/sack to 110-120,000 Ssh/sack.

Table 3 : 2003/2004 Deyr Cereal Production (MT) Compared To Deyr 2001, 2002 and PWA* Production

Regions	Deyr 2003			% change in production: 2003 vs. 2001	% change in production: 2003 vs. 2002	% change in production: 2003 vs PWA
	Sorghum	Maize	S+M			
Bakol	360	0	360	-82%	-90%	-76%
Bay	29,500	2,100	31,600	-17%	-27%	14%
Gedo	5,935	1,825	7,760	106%	-20%	76%
Hiran	2,840	630	3,470	-70%	-74%	-55%
Lower Juba	75	940	1,015	-8%	-19%	-51%
Lower Shabelle	10,650	29,490	40,140	-32%	-37%	2%
Middle Juba	2,250	1,560	3,810	9%	-5%	-10%
Middle Shabelle	1,405	11,400	12,805	-41%	-61%	-8%
Total	53,015	47,945	100,960	-28%	-41%	0%

* PWA (Post War Average 1995-2002)

Figure 9 : 2003/2004 Deyr Cereal Production Compared To Post War Average



High Maize prices in Shabelle Valley Regions

- Maize prices have increased in the Shabelle valley regions for a number of reasons:
- i) High demand from Mogadishu's Bakara market
 - ii) Market demand from northeastern Somalia
 - iii) Additional demand from the huge influx of livestock herders into Lower Shabelle
 - iv) Merchants are hoarding maize stocks at Qoryoley district.

Local cereal price increases during this post-harvest period is an alert sign for all southern regions of Somalia. The *Gu* season, which normally provides 75-80% of annual cereal production in Somalia, was poor in terms of cereal production throughout Southern Somalia in 2003. If the 2004-*Gu* cereal production is not normal, the most affected areas of southern Somalia are expected to be the five districts of Bakol, three districts of Hiran and Gedo regions. Close monitoring is necessary in the drought-affected areas of Bakol, Hiran and Gedo before mid-season *Gu*-2004 (around May).

Water Stress for Humans and Livestock

The water table is dropping in the dry areas of southern Somalia. Limited accessibility of water to human and livestock is posing a threat to the livelihoods of communities in Bakol, Hiran and Gedo regions. In these three regions, bore-wells and water catchments have already dried-up and long distances are travelled to collect water as high prices are paid for water locally. (See Regional Highlights of Hiran, Bakol and Gedo in this report). Moreover, lower water levels reduce the availability of clean water. The two rivers, Shabelle and Juba, are carrying dirty water from Hiran region (Belet Weyne) to Lower Shabelle region (Sablale) down stream, and the upper stream of River Juba at Bardhere in the Gedo region to the down stream of Gobweyn in the Lower Juba.

Sorghum Belt Prices and Trends

As a result of the *Deyr* crop harvest, cereal prices slightly decreased in nearly all reporting markets in February (Figure 10). In the sorghum belt, sorghum prices remained seasonally high when compared to normal prices during February, especially in Bakol and Hiran regions, where the *Deyr* crop harvest was very poor. In Baidoa (the main market of the Sorghum Belt) sorghum prices decreased by 17 percent, from 1,200 Ssh per kilogram in January to 1,000 Ssh per kilogram in February. Similarly, in Huddur, sorghum prices decreased by about 13 percent between January and February, although prices in Belet Weyne decreased moderately by about 3 percent. Sorghum prices compared to last year (2003 *Deyr*) at the same period, however, are higher this year than prices last year in all three markets by an average of 49 percent. (Figure 11). In Belet Weyne, one was able to purchase a kilo of sorghum at 2,000 Ssh in February 2003, but now had to pay 3,100 Ssh per kilogram in February 2004. The unfavorable forecast of below-normal *Gu* rains, especially in the Sorghum Belt (see Thirteenth

Figure 10 : Comparison Of Sorghum Prices In Selected Markets From Jan 2002 to Feb 2004

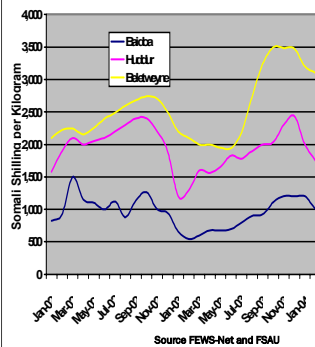
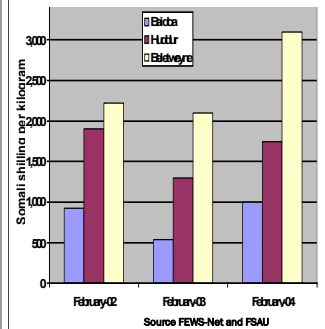


Figure 11 : Seasonal Comparisons of Sorghum Prices in Selected Markets, February 2002, February 2003 and February 2004



Climate Outlook), means that sorghum prices could increase further if lower prospects for the *Gu* crop prove true.

Current Livestock Exports and Trends

The number of livestock exported from Berbera and Bossaso ports decreased significantly in February as compared to January (see Table 4 below). The number of shoats (sheep and goats) exports decreased by 79% in Berbera and 38% in Bossaso, while cattle exports decreased by 36% in both ports. This decrease, however, was expected as January was the peak period in livestock demand for the *Haj* and the *Adhaa*.

Exportation of live animals from Bossaso has increased dramatically since 2001 despite the prolonged drought in the northern and central regions (Figure 12). In addition, live animal exports from Bossaso port have recovered from the livestock ban that was imposed by the Saudi

Table 4 : Livestock Exports for February 2004

	November	December	January	February
Bossaso*				
Camel	8	514	99	52
Cattle	5,773	3,953	7,944	5,041
Shoats	114,832	114,890	189,167	118,014
Sub-Total Bossaso	120,613	119,357	197,210	123,107
Berbera**				
Camel	0	1,507	0	1,018
Cattle	9,519	13,961	14,792	9,435
Shoats	72,819	76,720	177,376	35,573
Sub-Total Berbera	82,338	92,188	192,168	46,026
Total Number of Exports	202,951	211,545	389,378	169,133

* Bossaso Port Authority

** Berbera Port Authority

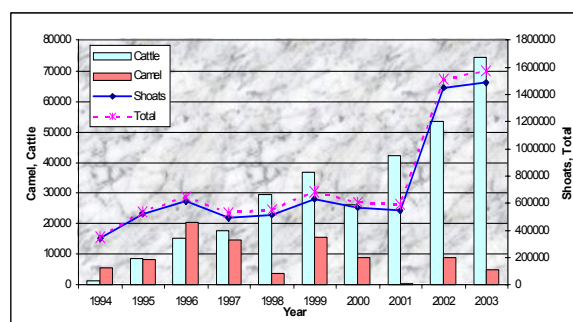
authorities and other Persian Gulf States in 1998. By late 2003, all Gulf States except Saudi Arabia had lifted the livestock ban. Currently, the main importers of Somali livestock are Yemen and UAE, followed by Oman, and

other small Gulf States.

Total livestock exports from Bossaso reached a record 1,570,357 in 2003, compared to 526,750 in 1997, the year before the first livestock ban was imposed. Total livestock exports from Berbera and Bossaso reached a peak of 2,932,021 in 1997, of which only 15% were exported through Bossaso Port. By 2003, total livestock exports from the two ports totaled 2,216,668, but Bossaso's share of this total had increased to 70%.

The high level of exports from Bossaso is partly due to livestock being trucked from as far away as Bakol, Hiran, Central Region and Region V of Ethiopia to Bossaso port as opposed to Mogadishu or Kismayo ports. Clan conflicts and civil insecurity are making transportation of livestock

Figure 12 : Bossaso Livestock Exports 1994–2003



through to the Mogadishu and Kismayo ports very difficult. The direct route through to Bossaso is currently much easier for traders.

Regional Highlights From the North of Somalia

References to Food Economy Zones (FEZ's) relate to information concerning different Food Economy and Livelihood Zones. For a map of these areas please contact : fsauinfo@fsau.or.ke or look at www.unsomalia.net under the 'FSAU' webpage and Maps.

NORTH MUDUG AND SOUTH NUGAL

The drought affected areas of eastern Burtinle and western Jariban, which have been highlighted as being areas of concern, are now going through the long dry *Jilaal* season which is leading to a further deterioration in the situation. The poor households are especially affected as they have not been able to move with their herds and have settled in villages with permanent water points, either boreholes or berkads. The boreholes are being operated round the clock and water prices are 4 to 5 times above normal prices. Their livestock are in very poor condition. The main source of food and income for these households are gifts and credit, which have increased by 100%. In the coastal areas and eastern Jariban, the light rains in November and December prompted an unusual in-migration of pastoralist and livestock from Eastern *Hawd* and Nugal Valley. Pasture in these areas is now depleted and water prices are skyrocketing, therefore there is increasing pressure for pastoralists to return to their areas. Conditions in the *Hawd* and Nugal are, however, not good. The *Hawd* has some remnants of pasture but water is scarce, while in the Nugal there is some water, but there is no pasture. The current condition of livestock concentrated in the coast areas and eastern Jariban is mixed, depending on the origin. Livestock migrated from Nugal Valley are in very poor condition, with very high mortality rates, no conception, minimal milk production, high mortality rate in pack camels and few saleable livestock. Livestock from Eastern *Hawd* are in mixed condition, with the biggest problem being exorbitant water prices and weak or the lack of pack camels. In general, immigrant assets have been drained by multiple relocations and they have limited or no social support therefore their access to credit and loans is limited. The coastal and sub-coastal pastoralists and livestock are in better condition, as they did not undergo relocation, depletion of assets, nor are they faced with the same water crisis. West of Burtinle, Galkayo and Goldogob received the normal but delayed *Deyr* rains which has resulted in high livestock in-migration from other areas. However, pasture and water is reported to be available with most berkads full. Livestock condition and production has improved. Tension is increasing, however, in grazing sites between Galkayo and Goldogob, and along the Ethiopian border. The terms of trade for livestock to cereal is not very favorable as price of shoats has decreased while the price of cereal has increased slightly.

NORTH NUGAL AND SOUTH BARI

The rainfall received at the end of November in the coastal areas of these two regions, which initially improved pasture, is now mostly used up. Those pastoralists that can afford it are now moving back with their belongings to their home areas in the *Hawd* of Garowe and Dan Gorayo, Gardo and Eil districts but conditions in these areas are also very poor since they are also suffering lack of availability of pasture and water too. In the region the price of water continues to rise to crippling and unaffordable levels (80,000 Ssh per drum has been reported in one place), putting additional stress on households. Some pastoralists that remain in the coastal areas have not been able to move for a variety of reasons : the cost of using a truck is too high, high death rate of pack camels due to drought conditions and inability of livestock to trek long distances due to weakened condition. Some pastoralists have resorted to using donkeys instead of camels for carrying but even donkeys have started to die and abandoned household belongings and assets have been observed in some villages. The Field Monitor reports that destitute pastoralists have been observed in Garowe. This situation in this area is declining rapidly and needs to be closely monitored.

AWDAL AND NORTH WEST

The food security situation of all the FEZ of the two regions is normal to above normal. Coastal, sub-coastal, Highlands, and *Hawd* pastoralists received good amounts of rainfall in February. More rain is expected in the coastal, sub-coastal and also the Golis highlands as they are still in *Hays*, therefore rain is expected to continue through March. In the Agro-pastoral zones, the *Jilaal* season was mitigated by the good rains received during the *Karan* season and the off-season rains of December 03. These rains, therefore, shortened the long dry season of *Jilaal* by improving pasture and water availability and accessibility. Livestock that has migrated in from other regions in Somalia and Zone Five of Ethiopia are still in the coastal areas and are expected to remain until rains fall in their permanent settlements. Milk production in the rained areas showed improvement when compared to last month. Milk prices were low due to increased supply. Political tension between the two Northern administrations increased Berbera Port activity as business people shifted their trade from Bosaso to Berbera. Vessels carrying different items (food and non-food items) have arrived in Berbera Port this month, which has led to an increase in the purchasing power in the urban areas. Berbera port figures indicated a reduction in the number of animals exported as compared to last month. This is expected, however, since last month coincided with the *Haj*, the peak period for livestock exports. See livestock export article on page 5. Finally, a locust assessment was made by EMPRES member countries, Djibouti and Somaliland authorities in the coastal and sub-coastal belts in mid-February. There is currently little cause for concern although some isolated, solitary adults were observed. Although there is no cause for alarm, the locust situation should be continued to be monitored closely.

SOOL REGION

There are no improvements Sool Plateau FEZ and the region remains in a state of humanitarian emergency. As the dry season progresses crucial resources of pasture and water are scarce. *Berkeds* are empty and the main *Awr-bowgays* borehole is not functioning. The current water shortage triggered new water trucking schemes and the price of water has gone from \$1.3 to \$2.2/drum this month. The area hosted a large influx of in-migrated herds, since December, which has over pressured limited resources. In-migrated livestock are likely to remain in the area until the next *Gu* season. Sales of shoats, charcoal burning, remittances and loans are the main income sources available at the moment. Almost all poor and middle households have limited access to daily food intake and food aid whether from local organizations or aid agencies are the main sources of food. Immunization programme of children under-five years and distribution of BP5 to malnourished children is underway. In the Nugal Valley, water is available and accessible throughout the valley, with the main sources being hand dug wells, shallow wells and streams. The lower segment of Nugal valley, parts of Las Anod and all of Taleh districts, continue to face an emergency food security situation. Pasture is scarce and livestock condition is poor. An increasing number of livestock who moved to *Hawd* eco-zone in December last year are now beginning to return to the area because of limited water availability in the *Hawd*. Upper Nugal Valley, northwest of Las Anod town, is better than Lower Nugal, but is being closely monitoring due to the alarming state of the pasture. A large number of the local herders have moved to the northern edge of the valley in Ail Afweyn district of Sanaag. In *Hawd* FEZ, the overall livelihood conditions are relatively better. However, local people are feeling the pinch of water shortage, especially in western *Hawd*. Most of the *Hawd* indigenous herds showed improvements in condition, while livestock in-migrated from Nugal Valley do not.

Regional Highlights From the North of Somalia Continued ...

TOGDHEER AND SANAAG

In the Sool Plateau of Sanaag region this month, a large number of pastoral households who moved to Bari region last December returned to their home areas. Those who could afford to, hired trucks to transport the animals, as their animals were too weak and many had lost their pack-camels. Livestock deaths have increased and abnormally high abortion rates in different localities within the affected plateau have been reported. All *berkeds* and *balleys* in the plateau are completely empty and the yield of boreholes has declined to below normal levels due to the effects of the prolonged drought. Water prices have increased dramatically and a large-scale water trucking is ongoing throughout the plateau. Pastoralists' cereal reserves have declined since they have had to convert a large portion of their income to buy water for human and livestock consumption. Normal income sources are being depleted (milk sales) and social support among pastoral households is drastically reduced. Many destitute and very poor households are experiencing food shortages and serious income deficits. In the *Hawd* of Togdheer, the vast majority of pastoralists who migrated to Zone V of Ethiopia when the *Deyr* rains failed, have not yet returned and are not expected to return until the *Gu* rains begin. It is estimated that 2,000-2,500 households returned back to areas between *Hji Salah* and *Dabagorayaalle*, which were less affected by drought than the eastern part of the *Hawd* of Togdheer. The pastoralists who either failed to move or returned to the affected areas for various reasons are in a state of food insecurity compounded by acute water shortage. Many villages in *Hawd* are abandoned and many villagers and some of the poor pastoralists moved to big urban centres like Burao.

BARI

Normal *Jilaal* season conditions are prevailing in Dharoor FEZ (Bossaso and Iskushuban districts) except in the *Uur Aloed* area (*Dharjaale* and *Dawa'aleey* villages) where a severe shortage of water and pasture is putting stress on livelihoods. The villages of *Hiriiro* and *Timirshe* are also suffering from water shortages. As is usual for this season availability and access to water has started to decline as has milk productivity. However, the condition of livestock is adequate with no outbreak of diseases. In-migrated Sool pastoral households have returned to their original areas. In the Sool FEZ (Iskushuban and Bender Beila districts) the situation is fragile as pastoral households have started moving from the coastal plains to inland grazing sites, earlier than usual, as availability and accessibility to pasture and water reduces. This area requires close monitoring. As in the Dharoor FEZ, fishing and lobster catching activities are ongoing in the coastal areas in both FEZ's. In general the food security situation of the coastal and urban communities is normal, coastal communities are still benefiting from good *Hays* rains received last month.

Regional Highlights From Southern Somalia ...

JUBA VALLEY

Weather conditions are dry, harsh and windy which is usual for *Jilaal* season. Natural water ponds and catchments have dried up early which have created increased water demands in inland areas. Livestock condition is normal in terms of production and reproduction levels in all parts of the valley, despite localized sheep skin diseases commonly known as *Mangi* observed in parts of Afmadow district. Cattle prices were declining during the month due to a decreased demand, while camel prices are normal and shoat prices fluctuating. Pasture, grazing and water availability continued to be normal and animals started moving towards permanent water point areas, with the exception of western Buale district due to the recent insecurity (clan clashes). It is reported that household stocks are being depleted in all parts of the Riverine FEZ due to the anticipated poor *Deyr* crop harvests, coupled with the sporadic insecurity and intra-district trade movements which pushing local cereal prices higher. West Jilib Bantu communities continue to have poor nutritional status and malnourished children from the Riverine households are attending the MSF-H therapeutic feeding centre in Mareerey. The Bantu community faces depleted food stocks, coupled with increased incidents of disease, such as measles, malaria, and pneumonia. See the Nutrition article opposite. The overall security situation of the two regions remains fragile and recent clan fighting in parts of Buale and Kismayo Districts put significant pressure on trade movements which could worsen the food security situation.

COWPEA BELT

The area has had four seasons of less than normal rainfall and is now experiencing the long dry *Jilaal* season causing further deterioration of the conditions. The water sources are declining and drying up, with increased water prices. The areas most affected by the water shortage are Elder to Galhareri and inland of Haradhere to Hobyo area. The livestock body condition is below normal and the pasture is below normal. The *Deyr* crop harvest was slightly below normal, thus the poor household's cereal stocks are relatively low. Coping mechanisms such as livestock selling, bush products, and remittances have declined relative to increased expenditure due to the *Jilaal* season. Employment opportunities have reduced due to reduced fishing activities at the coast.

Highlights From FSAU Nutrition Update and the Juba Valley

MSF-Holland conducted a nutritional assessment in Nov/Dec 2003 to develop a better understanding of the cause and nature of malnutrition found in Marere in the Juba Valley. The following are some highlights from the results of this assessment.

- The assessment confirmed that there is a chronic problem of malnutrition including severe oedema, within the riverine food economy group and malnutrition peaks recurrently before the harvesting season, which is the hunger period within the riverine food economy group.
- The seasonal malnutrition problem is associated with inadequate food intake in the months before the harvesting season. Food production is low due to the small land holding and part of it is normally sold to meet other household needs. The remaining stock is usually consumed before the next harvest. During the 'hunger gaps', the food intake is significantly reduced to unripe fruits and reduced quantities of maize.
- Malnutrition was confirmed as a leading cause of death. Crude mortality rates of 3.5/10,000/day and 2.8/10,000/day were recorded in the May-July 2003 and May-Dec 2003 recall period respectively. About 42% of children's deaths were attributed to malnutrition during both periods, with 25% of all the deaths having indications of oedema.
- MSF-H assessment recommendations include devising strategies that would enhance the seasonal household food security, treatment of severely malnourished children, promotion of health intervention initiatives and increased surveillance.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS FROM SOUTHERN SOMALIA

HIRAN

The food security situation of the agro-pastoralists in the region is tenuous and requires close monitoring. Agro-pastoralist depend on cattle and rainfed crops – and both of these have been adversely affected. Rain-fed crops failed and the agro-pastoral and riverine pasture have not recovered. The limited pasture that regenerated in localized areas has been depleted earlier than usual due to permanent grazing and limited migration options. Cattle must be foddered at high prices that are beyond the reach of most poor agro-pastoralists. Cattle body conditions have not recovered and there are reports of cattle deaths among agro-pastoralists in some areas. Agro-pastoral income earning options are also limited due to decreased milk production, a significant reduction of sellable animals, and poor agricultural employment. Riverine communities are better off, as they are benefiting from the ongoing Deyr harvest of irrigated crops which has normal to good yields. The pastoral population are food secure having benefited from improved pasture and grazing conditions as a result of the late Deyr rains. The condition of the pastoral browsing animals has improved and most of the camel and shoats can easily tolerate the hardship of ensuing dry spell.

Civil insecurity is negatively impacting food security due to temporary displacement of people, limited accessibility and mobility within the region and cross border trade between Belet Weyne and Ethiopia.

BAKOL

The overall food security situation for both agro-pastoral and pastoral economies in the region is of concern. All Deyr crops failed and pasture conditions are extremely poor following the poor rainfall. Overall livestock condition is below normal and the majority of livestock have already migrated to neighbouring Bay, Hiran and areas along the border and inside Ethiopia and those who were unable to migrate are faced with limited water and poor grazing conditions. Cattle are the most affected with significant reduction in body weight and most rely on hand-feeding with high costs. The water situation is deteriorating as most of the temporary water catchments have already dried up while the permanent water points throughout the region are going down day by day - of concern for both people and livestock. Cereal prices remain high and are making it difficult for the poor as their purchasing power is already very low, due to the high transport and road costs between Bay and Bakol regions. The very poor are responding to these shocks by migrating to other regions in search of employment and by increasing their sales of charcoal and other natural products. No rains were received in the month. Weather is hot and dry as it is in the middle of the long dry spell of the Jilaal season.

BAY

Food security conditions in the region are normal due to normal harvest for this Deyr season 2003/2004. Agro-pastoral production should last till the next harvest provided other factors, like insecurity, do not affect their stocks. Livestock conditions are normal as a result of improved pastures and grazing conditions following the Deyr rains. Livestock are currently in cropping areas consuming crop residues. Livestock from the Bakol region have been observed in the region due to poor conditions in Bakol, but this is unlikely to create problems unless the Jilaal season is prolonged beyond normal times. Water availability for humans and livestock is normal, except in Baidoa and Bur-Hakaba towns where water is scarce due to a drop in the water table. As a result, water prices have increased 100% in Baidoa and more than 200% in Bur-Hakaba.

GALGADUD

The overall food security situation of the region is fairly normal, except for some pockets in Abudwaq and Adaado districts, and IDPs in Dhusamareb and remote areas of Addun. These pockets have been affected by long periods of drought, they received no Deyr rains and insecurity is increasing. The accessibility, availability and price of water is normal, despite the prevalence of the long dry Jilaal season. The pasture availability has reduced; there is normal livestock migration in search of water. Livestock body condition is normal, though milk production is starting to decrease and this has caused an increase in the price of milk. Cereal prices have decreased due to an inflow of sorghum from other regions, as well as an inflow of maize from Somalia and through Galkayo. New conflicts have started in eastern Addun, which is of growing concern in terms of the insecurities adverse impact on food security.

GEDO

Normal Jilaal season continues to prevail in most parts of the region and the weather condition remained dry, hot and without rain. In general, the overall food security situation showed a positive trend during the month in most parts of the region where most of the food security indicators improved including, good livestock production and reproduction, good crop production (mainly in the south), good water and pasture availability, good terms of trade even for poor pastoralists and normal cross border trade activities. The general pasture, grazing and water availability remain satisfactory and will sustain the pastoral livelihood needs until the onset of the rains in all parts of the region. In the northern districts, poor crop production was recorded for the Deyr season but normal food availability is observed. This has been attributed to the recent food aid distribution by CARE that coincided with the ongoing poor crop harvests in the north. Trade flow (from Mogadishu) has been disrupted and discouraged by the intermittent civil insecurity in north which then decreased the overall imported food items in the main markets. This will eventually pressurize the purchasing power of the poorer households, mainly those in the northern districts. Declining livestock marketing (volume) and prices were seen in the main markets of the region due to the depreciation of the dollar (instability of the dollar exchange rates) and the trader's unwillingness to buy the expected livestock numbers. Shoa prices have fallen by 30% during the month as most of the herders continued to oversupply the markets to meet the expenses of the Jilaal period. CARE distributed a total of about 2,796 MT of free food in Gedo region to a total of 25,000 beneficiaries during February.

LOWER SHABELLE

With the exception of some areas on the eastern side of the river and pockets of flooded areas of Kurtun-warey District, the overall food security situation of the Riverine FEZ of the region is considered normal. Maize growers in the rain-fed and coastal areas encountered severe cereal deficit due to successive crop failures. Similarly, the sorghum crop in the rain-fed Afgoye area also faced serious yield reduction as gusts of wind discouraged pollination. Water availability for both human and livestock has become scarce and is worsening in many parts of the rain dependent areas and prices have increased. The worst hit by the water shortages are areas of Warer maleh of Brava and Dacaraha of Kurtunwarey districts. Livestock production and reproduction remain normal and most of the herders have access to purchase fallow fields and crop residues for livestock feeding. Poor households in both riverine and Agro-pastoral livelihoods are currently intensifying all coping options available: reduction of non staples, daily meals, seeking temporary loans and selling livestock and livestock products to support their livelihoods. Reduced food stock access—and availability at household level for pockets of riverine and most agro-pastoral rainfed groups, increasing cereal prices (5-10%) at the harvest time and the effort of land preparation (which requires more energy), means that there could be imminent food security deterioration and intensive close monitoring is required before the onset the Gu rainfall.

