

Food Security and Nutrition

May 2005 Monthly Brief

Highlights

Civil Insecurity: Tensions persist in the lead-up to the relocation of the Somali Federal Transitional Government to Somalia. At the same time, resource-based clan conflicts are ongoing or increasing in Gedo, Bakool, Bay and Central Region. Additional insecurity during the main *Gu* season could further destabilize food security and undermine the *Gu* season, which typically contributes roughly 70-75% of annual food and fodder production.

Climate: The main rainy season in the region, locally known as the *Gu* rains, started throughout most of the country in the second half of April. This indicates a timely start of the season, while the intensity and coverage of these rains tends to support the prediction that the *Gu* rains will be normal to above normal in most areas. In the north, parts of central and pastoral areas of Juba Valley cumulative rainfall for April was significantly above normal, by as much as 120-300% of long term mean. The Shabelle Valley and the coastal strip from Iskushuban (Bari) to Kismayo, however, remained fairly dry in April according to field reports (page 2).

Markets: The Somali and Somaliland Shilling remained stable against the US dollar during April in most markets. Both currencies have stabilized over the past six months, trading between 15,100-16,200 SOSH/US\$ and 6,000-6,300 SLSH/US\$ for the Somali and Somaliland Shilling respectively. Import commodity prices closely follow exchange rate fluctuations and these also have in general remained fairly stable during this same period (page 2).

Nutrition: Various indicators suggest that malnutrition levels continue to be significantly above the usual range in Luuq District, Jilib riverine areas, Dusamareb and Adaado Districts. Persistent and critically high acute malnutrition rates continue to be recorded among Bosasso IDPs (page 2).

Agriculture: Shabelle Valley, the country's main maize production area, largely missed out on the start of the *Gu* rains according to field reports. Agricultural activities, however, such as land preparations, dry sowing of irrigated and rain-fed maize and canal digging have begun in anticipation of the May rains. Off-season sesame production in Shabelle is exceptionally good and is roughly estimated at 2,400 MT. Off-season maize production in both Shabelle and Juba is reported to be extremely low, roughly estimated at 1050MT and 100MT respectively. In the northwest agropastoral areas maize and sorghum planted in late March benefited from April rains, while in the Sorghum Belt April rains, although light, were sufficient for sorghum planting (page 3).

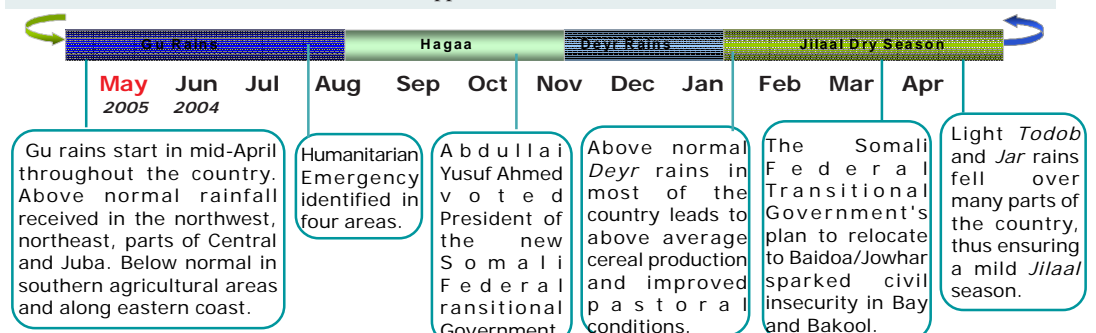
Livestock: Above normal rainfall in pastoral areas of the northwest, northeast, parts of central and Juba Region, has started to regenerate pastures and replenish water sources, leading to general improvements in livestock body conditions and increased reproduction and livestock products. Livestock migration to wet season grazing areas is occurring and there is a reduced supply of livestock to markets as pastoralists are holding livestock for fattening, kidding and milk production. Sheep/goat exports from Berbera and Bosasso ports totaled 142,578 heads in April, which is within the normal monthly 'non-peak' export range (page 3).

Emerging Regional Issues: (page 4)

- Above normal April rains in the **Humanitarian Emergency Areas in the North** further confirm the end of the three year long drought as reported in the FSAU Post Deyr Analysis (Technical Series No. IV, Feb. 28, '05). The full extent and timeline of recovery cannot be determined until a full post *Gu* assessment is conducted in June/July.
- Above normal rainfall in the north led to **flash floods** in Hargeisa and other areas, resulting in the loss of human lives, population displacements, and the destruction on property and infrastructure.
- Heavy rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands is causing river levels to rise rapidly and increasing the risk to flooding in downstream **Shabelle River**. Water levels of **Juba River** remained low through April.
- Clan conflict in **El Wak Town, Gedo** resulted in the displacement of around 15,000 people, disrupted markets, closed trade routes and stopped economic and livelihood activities.

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Climate

The main rainy season or the *Gu* rains started in many parts of the country during the second dekad of April and are expected to continue through mid-June. This indicates a timely start of the season and suggests a normal to above normal *Gu* rainy season, especially for the north and parts of central Somalia.

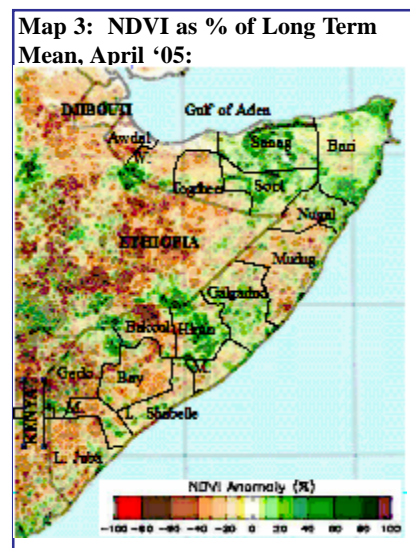
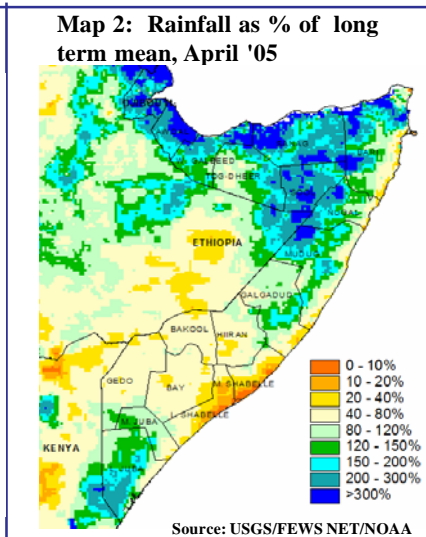
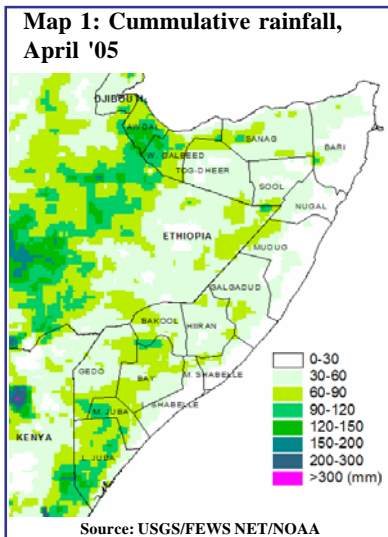
Satellite imagery (Figure 2) shows and field reports confirm that compared to a long term average, the start of the *Gu* rains in the northwest, northeast and parts of the central regions were significantly above normal, by as much as 120-300% of the long term mean.

Heavy rains in Sanaag, Togdheer, and Woqooyi Galbeed Regions resulted in high surface runoff, which destroyed roads and bridges. In Hargeisa and Burao towns, rains destroyed houses and displaced a large number of people. These rains, however, have uniformly replenished water sources and renewed pasture and browsing conditions. Similarly, heavy rains of up to 300% above normal fell in the drought affected Sool Plateau, Gebi, and Nugaal Valleys. Field reports confirm substantial improvement in pasture and water conditions that are leading to improvements in livestock body conditions.

In the southern agricultural regions, and along the entire coastal strip from Iskushuban (Bari Region) to Kismayo, rainfall was largely below normal (Figure 2). Different satellite data shows inconsistencies (see FSAU Monthly Climate Update May 2005), however, triangulation with field reports indicate that the much of the Shabelle Valley remained dry during April, and received only localized showers.

In Bay, Bakool, and Gedo, satellite imagery suggests April rains were slightly below normal, however, field reports indicate that rains were sufficient to support crop germination and have improved water supply and pasture conditions. In pastoral areas of Juba Valley, satellite imagery indicates rainfall was significantly above normal, i.e. 150-200% of long term mean, however, field reports indicate that rainfall may not be as high or evenly distributed. Compared to last year and the long term average, vegetation conditions, as measured by NDVI (Map 3 and FSAU Climate Update May '05) shows very little improvement in southern Somalia. However, given the lag effect following the rains the situation is expected to improve over the coming weeks.

For more details see FSAU Climate Data Update, May 2005



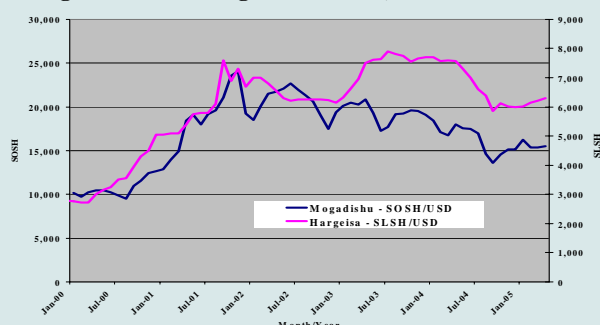
markets - nutrition - climate

Markets

The Somali and Somaliland Shilling remained fairly stable against the US Dollar during April (Figure 1). In the Mogadishu market, the Somali Shilling in April traded at an average of 15,475 Ssh/US\$ (15,375 Ssh/US\$ in March), while in Hargeisa the Somaliland Shilling traded at 6,300 SLSH/US\$ (6,200 SLSH/US\$ in April). Both currencies are significantly depreciated against the US\$ when compared to their value in 2000 year, i.e. 53% and 129% for the Somali and Somaliland Shilling respectively. April import commodity prices, i.e. petrol, sugar, rice and vegetable oil, are closely linked to exchange rate trends and remained fairly stable in most main markets throughout the country.

For more details see FSAU/FEWSNET Market Data Update, May 2005.

Figure 1: Fluctuation in the Somali and Somaliland Shilling in Mogadishu and Hargeisa Markets, 2000 - Current



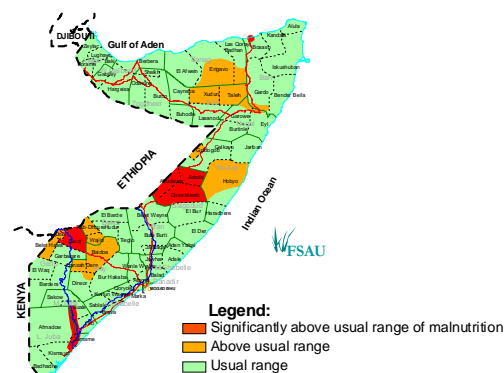
Nutrition

Levels of malnutrition as measured by various indicators suggest that malnutrition continues to be significantly above the usual range in Luuq District, Jilib riverine area, Dusamareb/Adaado Districts and among the Bossaso IDP population (Map 4).

Persistent and critically high levels of acute malnutrition are recorded in **Bosasso IDP populations** since January 2005, despite the ongoing intervention efforts by WFP, UNICEF and Aid (local NGO). Blended foods and a comprehensive health and nutrition services package are provided to the malnourished children, pregnant and lactating women.

For more details see FSAU Monthly Nutrition Update, April 2005.

Map 4: Current Overall Nutrition Situation



Agriculture

The onset of the *Gu* rains in April was erratic and uncertain in the main agriculture production areas of Shabelle and Juba Valleys, but was normal to above normal in other agricultural regions of the country.

In northwest agropastoral areas, above normal rains in April significantly improved the production prospects for the already planted maize and the first weeding activity began. Farmers also began to plant sorghum crops in response to the good rains received in April. The price of imported rice and terms of trade (cereal to labor) have remained fairly stable over the last four months throughout the region (Figure 2 and 3).

In Lower Shabelle there is a good harvest of off-season sesame production, (roughly estimated at 2,400 MT), which is likely due to the increased area planted and better yields associated with the significant *Deyr* rains and the ensuing recession flooding. Off-season maize production, on the other hand, is low (roughly estimated at 1,050 MT). Harvesting of late-planted sesame is still ongoing and is benefiting from the delayed *Gu* rains in the area. Ongoing agriculture activities include: *Gu* season land preparation and cultivation, canal digging, dry sowing of maize in both irrigated and rainfed areas, and harvesting of off-season sesame. Maize prices continue to increase as expected due to the limited supply created by the poor *Deyr* season harvest. Maize prices increased by 7% over last month, but are 14% higher than the same time last year. Maize prices are likely to continue to increase through to mid-*Gu* season, when the performance of the maize harvest will be clear.

The off-season crop harvest in Juba Valley, especially for maize, is poor (roughly estimated at 100 MT). Sesame production is slightly better, roughly estimated at 450 MT. Poor off-season production in the *Dhesheks* of Juba Valley are attributed to insect pests, dry spells, and moisture stress. A majority of the standing crops in the field face a high risk of flooding and spoilage due to the current *Gu* rains. Maize prices in the region increased 6% over last month and are expected to continue to increase due to the shortage of maize in the region, combined with the increasing inaccessibility of the region due to the muddy roads.

Figure 2: Average Monthly Cereal Prices (US\$)

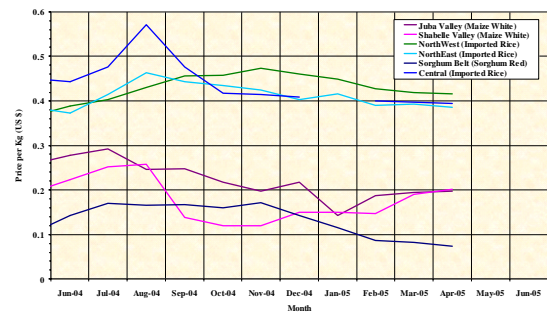
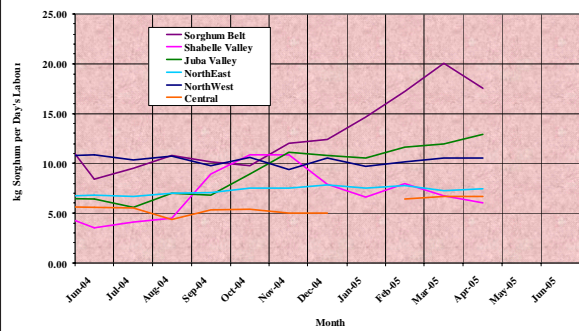


Figure 3: Average Monthly Terms of Trade (Cereal To Labour)



* North and Central - Bossaso, Garowe, Galkayo, Hargeisa, Lasanod; Juba Valley - Afmadow, Buale, Kismayo, Jamame, Hagar; Sorghum Belt - Bardera, Belet Weyne, Hudur, Baidoa; Shabelle Valley - Afgoye, Merka, Qoryoley, Jowhar

In the Sorghum Belt, the onset of the *Gu* rains improved water availability and agricultural employment opportunities in most parts of the regions, with the exception of conflict affected areas like Baidoa, and Qansxdhere (Bay) and Elwak (Gedo). Sorghum prices continue to decline in the main markets. Compared to last month, sorghum prices declined by 8% and are 30% lower than the same month last year. Terms of trade are favorable for poor agro-pastoralists due to high labor wages and low cereal prices.

Livestock

Timely and well-distributed *Gu* rains throughout the northeast and northwest of the country during April replenished water sources and renewed pastures. Despite surface runoff and localized flooding in Sanaag and Togdheer Regions, and the Hawd of Hargeisa, the heavy rains are promoting rangeland recovery, which were already in a good condition due to above-normal *Deyr* rains (October –December '04). Improvements have also occurred with respect to the water and pasture conditions along the coastal belt of Awdal Region, where pastoralist were under stress due to an influx of pastoralists from Shinille area of Ethiopia. As a result, livestock body conditions, production, and reproduction continue to improve.

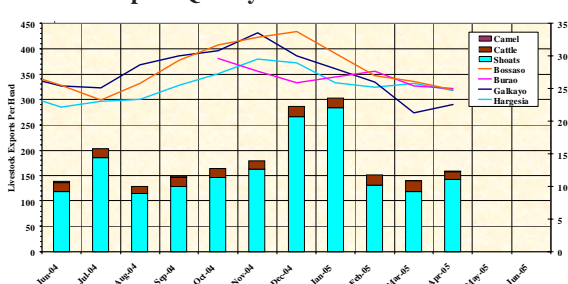
In the Sool Plateau and Nugaal Valley, above normal goat and sheep kidding began last month and has increased milk and ghee

availability at the household level. More kidding is expected over the coming weeks, which will further improve households' food and income sources. Camel calving rates (and the associated milk production) are currently well below normal due to longer gestation periods. The first calving is expected to coincide with the next *Deyr* season. Although livestock productivity has improved, many of the poorer pastoralists are not able to benefit fully due to depleted livestock herds and indebtedness. Gifts from better-off households, kinship support, and continued humanitarian assistance is sustaining the poorer and destitute pastoralists.

In the south, livestock conditions are improving and livestock started to move to wet season grazing areas, where the water and pasture situation has improved with start of the *Gu* season.

Generally, livestock prices have begun to increase in many markets, due to improving livestock conditions, as well as a reduced supply in markets as pastoralists are fattening animals and keeping animals for the milk/ghee production.

Figure 4: Livestock Exports from Berbera and Bossaso Ports and Export Quality Prices



A total of 142,578 sheep/goats were exported from Berbera and Bossaso Ports in April, which is a slight increase over March, but within the normal 'non-peak' export range of 100-150,000 per month (Figure 4). Of this total, Bosaso continues to export the largest share, i.e. 68% of total shoat exports in April, although Berbera shoat exports increased over last month, from 19,749 Shoats in March to 45,458 in April. Total cattle exported from the two ports decreased slightly over last month at (15,079 heads), while the number of camel exported remained fairly stable (1,668 heads). Berbera Port continues to export the larger share of cattle (57%) and camel (64%).

Integrated Food Security Analysis: Emerging Regional Issues

emerging regional issues

Northwest

Above normal rains throughout Awdal, W. Galbeed and Togdheer led to flash floods and high surface runoff resulted in the loss of human lives, displacement of hundreds of people, and the destruction of property and infrastructure. Hargesia was especially affected, but other towns and areas were also affected. On the positive side, these heavy rains are replenishing water tables, regenerating pastures and benefiting crop growth. In Togdheer, good rains are encouraging agro-pastoralists to plant maize. Rains received in coastal and sub-coastal areas are regenerating the heavily browsed rangelands.

Northeast

Above normal *Gu* rains are regenerating rangelands and water sources. Livestock body conditions are improving, shoats are kidding at high rates, and goat milk is widely available. Field reports indicate some poor pastoralists are rebuilding herds with livestock donated by better-off relatives. Restocking amongst poor pastoralists and destitute households, and the purchases of pack animals (camel or donkey) indicates a growing optimism amongst the pastoralists.

Hiran

Gu rains started in the northern parts of the region with normal intensity and distribution and are replenishing water and pasture sources in pastoral areas. Areas in the south (Buloburti and Jalalaqsi districts) remained dry as rains were below normal. Heavy rains in Ethiopian highlands resulted in increased river levels and risk to flooding.

Gedo

In north Gedo, the security situation has improved, but chronic food insecurity and high malnutrition rates persist. The food security situation in south Gedo is improved, except Elwak district where about 15,000 people were displaced by recent clan conflict in Elwak town. The level of displacement is one of the worst in recent history. Insecurity disturbed market activities and blocked trade routes, which in turn increased essential commodity prices.

Juba

The start of the *Gu* rains was erratic and uneven in riverine areas and the Juba River's water level is still low making irrigation operations difficult. Malnutrition rates are increasing, following normal seasonal trends associated with the end of the long dry season and the lead-up to the *Gu* harvest time. Pastoral areas received good rains and rangelands and livestock conditions are improving. Environmental degradation associated with excessive charcoal production is a major problem undermining short and long-term food security.

Shabelle

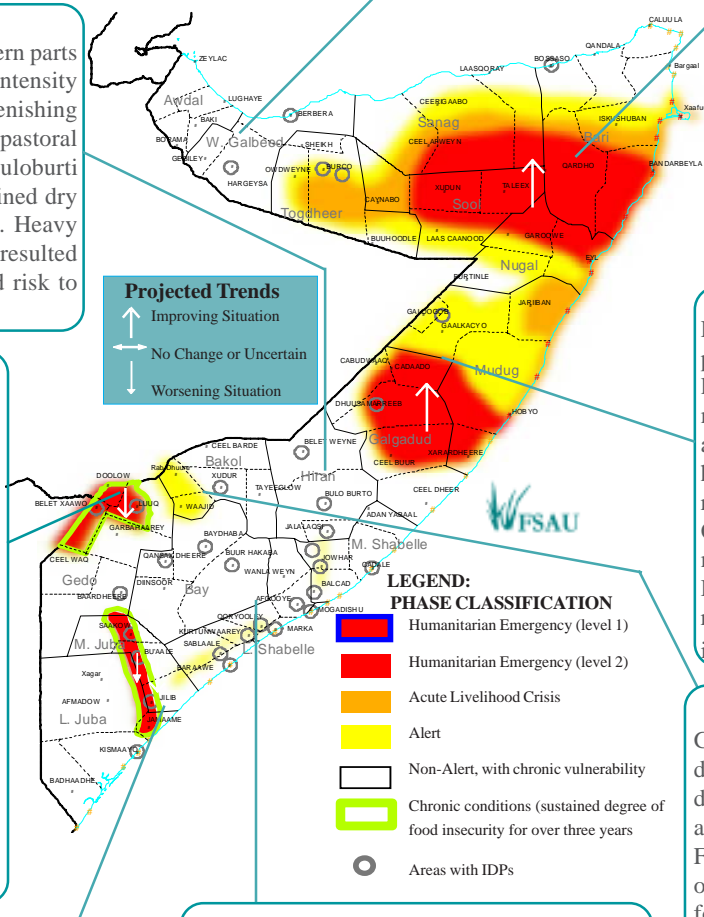
Hot dry weather persists across most of the Shabelle Valley, with no significant recent rainfall region. The Shabelle River reached full capacity during the third dekad of April following heavy rains in Ethiopian highlands, increasing opportunities for irrigation and also increasing the risk of flooding. Ongoing activities include: land preparation, canal digging, harvesting off-season sesame, and dry sowing of maize in irrigated and rainfed areas are ongoing. Maize prices continued to increase by 7% over the last month and are 14% higher than at the same time last year.

Central

Rainfall in the coastal cowpea production area has been very low leading to increased water prices in most of the settlements north of Elder and south of Hobyo District. In the hinterland, however, good rains are replenishing pasture and water sources. Ongoing clan fighting over the last few months in Haradhere and Hobyo Districts subsided in April, but could resume as IDPs are still scattered in the in towns.

Bay and Bakool

Gu rains started with fairly normal distribution and intensity in most of the districts, leading to improved rangelands and the start of the *Gu* planting season. Farming activities are at their peak, offering additional income opportunities for the poor. Civil insecurity in parts of the region, however, continues to limit the benefits of these positive seasonal trends for many people. Clan conflict in Bay Ofurow high-potential sorghum-growing area (Qansadhere District) in March displaced over 2000 families. Houses and underground stores (*bakaar*) were burnt and crucial farming activities were disrupted. Children screened in MCH centers continue to record high levels of malnutrition. In Bakool, ongoing insecurity in the pastoral areas of Rabdure and Elberde Districts continues to limit access to rangeland and markets.



Projected Trends

- ↑ Improving Situation
- ↔ No Change or Uncertain
- ↓ Worsening Situation

LEGEND: PHASE CLASSIFICATION

- Humanitarian Emergency (level 1)
- Humanitarian Emergency (level 2)
- Acute Livelihood Crisis
- Alert
- Non-Alert, with chronic vulnerability
- Chronic conditions (sustained degree of food insecurity for over three years)
- Areas with IDPs

- Recent Reports:** FEWSNET-Somalia/SWALIM: Flood Watch Somalia, April 2005
 FSAU : Monthly Nutrition Update, April 2005
 FS/EW Somali Region, Ethiopia: Food Security 'Flash', April 2005
 FEWSNET-Somalia: Rain-watch, April 2005
 UNICEF Somalia: Jowhar Flood Technical Committee Update, May 2005
- Surveys:** FSAU Nutrition Survey: Dangoroyo/Eyle District, 21 May - 2 June 2005

** Agencies are encouraged to submit information on reports, surveys and forthcoming workshops to be highlighted in this section**



Technical and Managerial Support



Funding Agencies



Technical Partners

