

# Food Security & Nutrition

## Special Brief - Focus on Risk Factors

Climate

Markets

Nutrition

Agriculture

Livestock

Civil  
Insecurity

The brief provides an update of the key risk factors identified during the *Gu* 2007 seasonal assessment and analysis (see *Technical Series released September 21*). The brief focuses on the rainfall prospects for the *Deyr* 2007/08 season, the ongoing civil insecurity and displacement in the Shabelle regions, market prices, and results from recent nutrition assessments. As the *Deyr* season begins, FSAU will be closely monitoring river levels in the coming weeks. Nutrition assessments are planned for Galgadud and the Shabelle regions in late October. FSAU is also updating livelihood baselines in Bay and Bakool during late October and November.

### KEY

### ISSUES

**Rainfall:** Although it is too early to determine the impact of the *Deyr* season, satellite imagery indicates, and field reports confirm, that early rains were received in part of the country. Heavy rains in June-September in the Ethiopian highlands have already caused increased river levels, especially on the Shabelle River, which have resulted in localized floods in Hiran (Jalalaqsi) and Middle Shabelle (Jowhar and Balad). Early

rains have helped replenish berkadis in parts of the northwest (NW), northeast (NE) and Central regions.

**Markets:** The Somali Shilling continues to lose value against the US Dollar in most of the regions. Prices of imported food commodities like rice, sugar and vegetable oil, are now at all-time peak levels in all markets in Shabelle and Central regions.

**Displaced:** According to the latest figures from the Protection Cluster (October 5), there are currently 365,000 people displaced as a result of the violence in Mogadishu to Shabelle and Central regions, predominantly. Tensions are high in the Juba regions, and road blocks continue to increase in number in Lower and Middle Shabelle, as well as Hiran.

**Nutrition:** A rapid assessment using MUAC, conducted by FSAU in Middle and Lower Shabelle in August and September, highlighted a continuing deterioration in the numbers of acutely malnourished children identified in Middle Shabelle region, with lower though still high levels in Lower Shabelle region.

### CIVIL INSECURITY

There has been a deterioration of the security situation in the Juba regions, with killings and clan fighting. In the Shabelle regions, tensions continue in Merka. The number of freelance road blocks has increased throughout the region, as well as the number of insurgents in the area. Similarly in Hiran, road blocks continue to hamper trade and add to the cost of basic commodities. There are border tensions between Puntland and Somaliland, especially in the Lasanod area, with reports of increased troop numbers.

According to the latest figures from the Protection Cluster, (October 5), there are currently 365,000 people displaced as a result of the violence in Mogadishu. FSAU carried out a rapid Nutrition and Food Security assessment in September, with results presented in the Nutrition section.

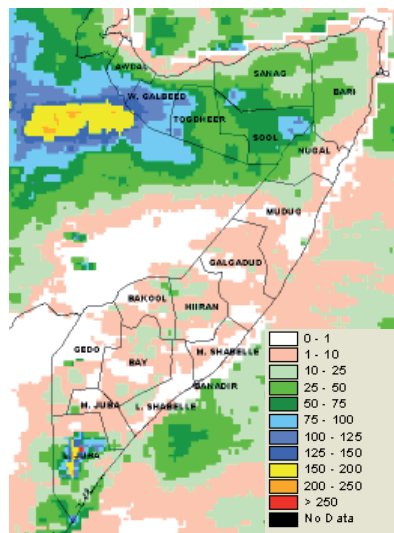
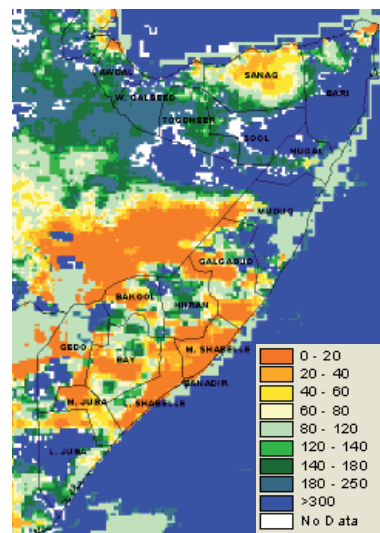
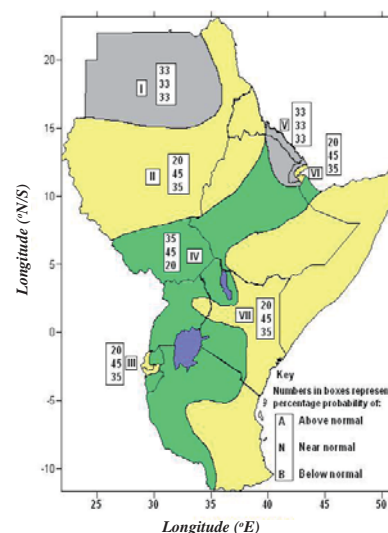
### CLIMATE

Consensus of the recent Climate Outlook Forum (COF 20) for the Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) indicates there is an increased likelihood of near to below-normal rainfall over much of Somalia (see *Map 1, 2 and 3*) during the period September to November 2007. The only exceptions within Somalia are Awdal region and parts of the Hawd of Hargiesa, which may receive near to above-normal *Deyr* rains.

The forecast also indicates above-normal rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands, including part of the upper catchments of the Juba and Shabelle river basins. Heavy rains in June-September in the Ethiopian highlands have already caused increased river levels, especially the Shabelle River, which resulted in localized floods in Hiran and Middle Shabelle. The condition of irrigation and road infrastructure in these regions was seriously affected by the El Nino floods in *Deyr* 2006/7, which further damaged river embankments, irrigation canal ridges, culverts and barrages. Another season of flooding in the riverine areas of the Shabelle regions, which is currently in a Humanitarian Emergency situation, is likely to increase the vulnerability level in these areas.

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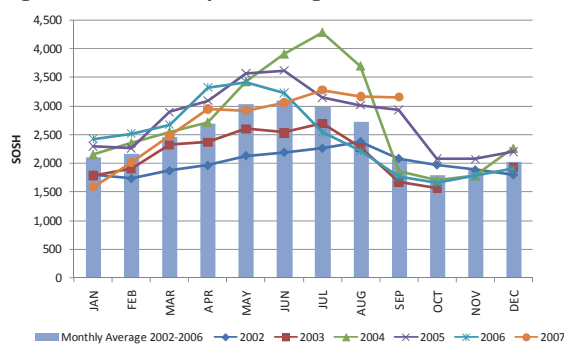
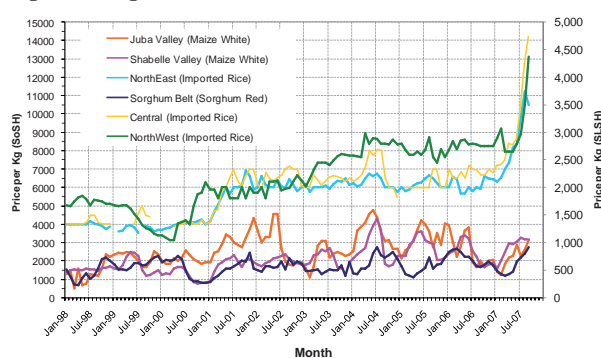
**Map 1: Cumulative Rainfall (mm), (September 2007)****Map 2: Rainfall as % of Long Term Mean (September 2007)****Map 3: Climate Outlook Forum - Rainfall Sept - Dec '07**

Satellite imagery indicates, and field reports confirm, that early rains were received in part of the country. Some areas like Juba regions and parts of Sool, Sanaag and Nugaal regions received up to 20mm of rainfall during the last dekad of September 2007.

## AGRICULTURE

During late September and early October, average to good rains were received in agro-pastoral and riverine livelihood areas in Juba, Bay and Bakool regions. This has enhanced the condition of late planted *Gu* cereal crops at standing stage in Juba regions, and early *Deyr* dry sowing stage crops in agro-pastoral livelihoods in all these regions. There have also been sporadic light rains in most parts of Shabelle and Hirran regions. Some flooding has been reported in Middle Shabelle (Jowhar and Balad) due to heavy rains in the Ethiopian catchment and the generally poor conditions of flood control and irrigation infrastructure, exacerbated by the *Deyr* '06/07 floods. The scope of damage is estimated at 1,000 – 1,500ha in Middle Shabelle, of *Gu* maize at harvest, early planted *Deyr* crops, and *Haga* sesame and vegetable crops. In both rivers the water level is currently high. If rains in the Ethiopian highlands continue, there is an elevated risk of more flooding, particularly in the Shabelle regions. FSAU will closely monitor any future flooding and associated impacts on the livelihoods.

Recessional cereal production from Juba Valley was projected to be 1,600 MT during the Post *Gu* '07 assessment (1,000MT and 600MT from Juba and Gedo regions, respectively). The *Karan* rains in the Northwest were above-normal and well distributed with good intensity; therefore, crop production is expected to be higher than the *Gu/Karan* crop establishment projections of 25,236MT. FSAU is planning to carry out an off-season assessment in the Juba regions in mid-October, and a *Gu/Karan* post-harvest crop assessment in the second dekad of November 2007. In Shabelle regions, the center of the current crisis, prices of maize have eased very slightly since July (Figure 1). However, they have still increased by 99% between January and September '07, and are also 53% higher in September '07 compared to the five-year average (2002 – 2006) (Figure 1). Afgoye, where the largest proportion of the newly displaced populations reside, recorded the highest maize price increase of 199% between January and September, which is also 37% above the five year September average (2002 – 2006). In the Sorghum Belt, sorghum prices increased by 103% from January to September and by 62% compared to five year September average (2002 – 2006). Due to the demand from Mogadishu and surrounding regions, more

**Figure 1: Shabelle: 5-year Average Maize Prices****Figure 2: Regional Trend in Cereal Prices (SoSh)**

sorghum markets were established in Qansahdhere district (Habaal Barbaar and Ufurow), Dinsor (Gurban and Tugar Hosle) and more sorghum was exported to these destinations in the last two months. Poor *Gu*'07 cereal production, the demand of sorghum grains from the neighboring regions and retaining sorghum for household consumption have all contributed to the sorghum price increases. In the Juba regions, there was a significant increase of maize in all main markets between January and September '07 with aggregate maize prices increasing by 123% and 29% between January to September and the 5-year September average respectively. This is attributed to increased demand by southeastern and south inland pastoral livelihood groups, and spaghetti factories in Mogadishu and Shabelle regions. Compared to the five year September average (2002 – 2006), the maize prices in September '07 were higher by 52% in Doble, 39% in Buale and 36% in Hagar (*Figure 2*). In the coming months (i.e. before the *Deyr*'07/08), cereal prices, mainly maize and sorghum, are expected to increase due to low cereal supply. FSAU will closely monitor the cereal market availability, prices and supply.



*Aloe Vera plants, northwest region, September '07*  
FSAU

Labor opportunities in September declined due to the *Gu*'07 poor crop production and associated reduced agricultural activities, resulting in reduced income opportunities for poor households. In addition, increased cereal prices and the devaluation of the Somali Shilling have reduced the purchasing power of the households. Compared to January, terms of trade (TOT) between labor and cereal decreased by 55%, 38% and 37% in Shabelle regions, Juba regions and the Sorghum Belt respectively. Compared to the five-year average, terms of trade for September (2002 – 2006), there is no change between labor and cereals in Juba regions and the Sorghum Belt; however, the same terms of trade in Shabelle regions have dropped by 37% due to cereal price increases, the devaluation of the Somali Shilling and limited job opportunities.

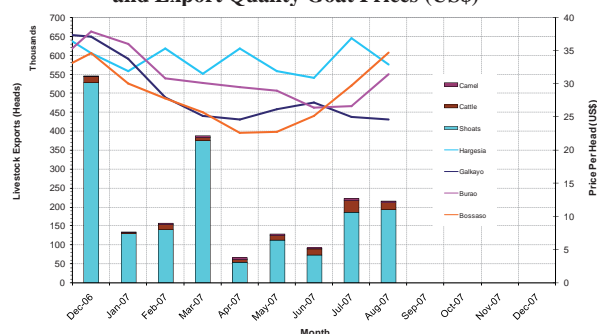
## LIVESTOCK

Favorable *Karan* rains have continued in Awdal and Hargeisa with the exception of the Guban Livelihood Zone. *Deyr* '07/08 rains started early in most parts of the northern regions and are widely distributed, including the *Coastal Deeh* and *Dharoor* areas, which experienced poor rainfall during *Gu* '07. This has replenished many of the berkads. Coastal and nearby areas of Juba and Shabelle valleys received moderate showers. Both pasture and water have improved, and some highly palatable species have reappeared in NW regions. In localised pockets, immature locusts, however, have been reported at several points in Somaliland and Puntland that have devastated pasture. In the south and central regions, pasture quality deteriorated, especially in *Deeh-Berkad* dependent areas. While water trucking is continuing in central berkad-dependent areas, water prices have remained stable.

Intra-district and regional movements were observed in all livelihoods. The NW Guban pastoralists have moved to sub-coastal areas and the southern flank of the mountains due to recent *Karan* rains, while Ainabo Sool plateau Pastoralists have moved to the Northern Hawd plateau in search of green pasture. Bay cattle migrated to Southern Dinsoor, Buale and Lower Shabelle. Bakool livestock moved to cropped areas, benefiting from fallow land and crop residues. In NW, NE & Juba regions livestock body conditions have improved significantly (*see photo below*), while in Central, Hiran, Shabelle and Bay/Bakool regions there was further deterioration in cattle and sheep body conditions. In Northern/Central regions, camel calving and goat kidding have started, though at low rates. Rates are expected to increase in November-December 07, and thus improved milk production is projected at this stage.

Generally, livestock prices increased in the NE, Juba, Shabelle and Central regions in the month of September, while NW, Sorghum belt and Gedo regions experienced a decline in the price of local quality goats. In September, com-

**Figure 3: Berbera & Bossaso: Livestock Exports (Heads) and Export Quality Goat Prices (US\$)**



*Good Camel Body Condition, Hawd, Togdheer, September '07 FSAU*



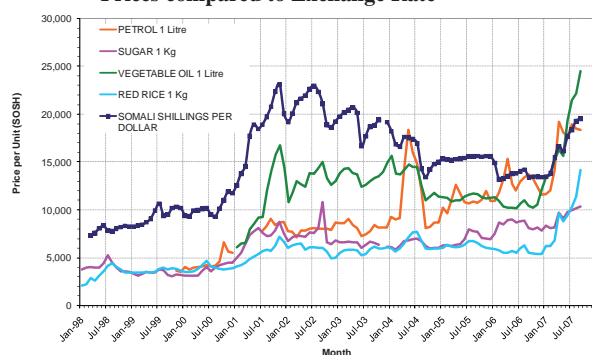
pared to January and August respectively, cattle prices increased by 31% and 18% in the Shabelle regions and 101% and 14% in the Juba regions. In NW, goat prices declined due to over-supply and a slight strengthening of the Somaliland Shilling (SLSH) against the US Dollar. (Total livestock exports from Bossaso port doubled from August to September (from 97,178 to 204,833 head), the highest since Dec '06, possibly in anticipation of the Eid celebrations in mid October (Figure 3). In addition to the export of live animals, Burao slaughterhouse carcass exports increased by 28% (from 5,008 to 6,425 carcasses) compared to August '07 but decreased by 65% compared to September '06 (18,315 carcasses). In the Shabelle regions, average terms of trade (cereal to goat) increased slightly between August and September (from 142 to 144.6 kg) due to a slight increase in goat prices, but they are still 43% lower than January. In the central region, terms of trade remained stable compared to August, but are 30% lower than in January. The rest of Somalia shows a declining trend due to high cereal price increases. (Figure 4).

## MARKETS

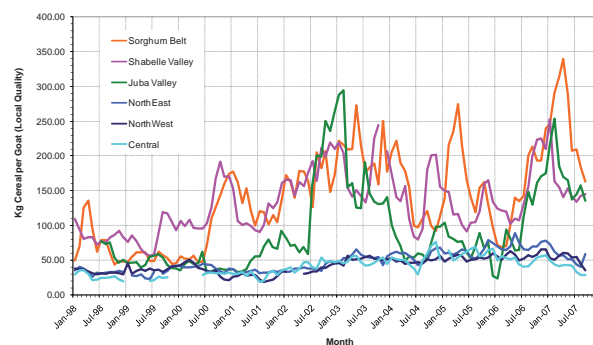
The Somali shilling continues to lose value against the US dollar in most of the regions. In the Shabelle regions, the shilling depreciated by 45 % since January, while in the central regions it depreciated by 49%, from Somali Shilling (SoSh) 13,757 in January to SoSh 20,517 per dollar in September (charts 1 and 2). The depreciation is mainly due to the high supply of new Somali shilling notes, which resulted in a loss of traders' confidence in the shilling and hence an increase in demand for US Dollars. The Somaliland Shilling has strengthened slightly against the US dollar over the last two months. Prices of imported food commodities like rice, sugar and vegetable oil are now at peak levels in all markets in the Shabelle and central regions (Figure 5). For example, in Shabelle Valley, the price of imported rice has increased by 127%, from Ssh 6,244 per kilogram in January to Ssh 14,188 in September, and is 132% above the five-year average (Figure 6). and the price of sugar and vegetable oil increased by 24% and 83% respectively. In Central region markets, rice, sugar and vegetable oil have increased by 97%, 19% and 69%, respectively since January and when compared to five average, rice has increased by 110%, from Ssh 6,787 to 14,200 (Figure 8).

Rapid and continued devaluation of the Somali Shilling, increased transportation costs and conflict-related disruptions in internal trade and import activities continue to push prices high, thereby affecting poor household purchasing power and food access (Figure 7).

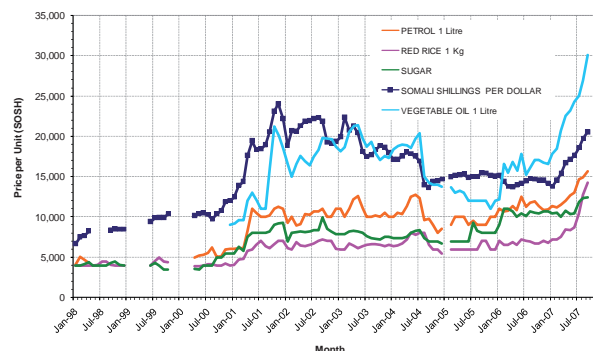
**Figure 7: Shabelle Valley: Trend in Imported Commodity Prices compared to Exchange Rate**



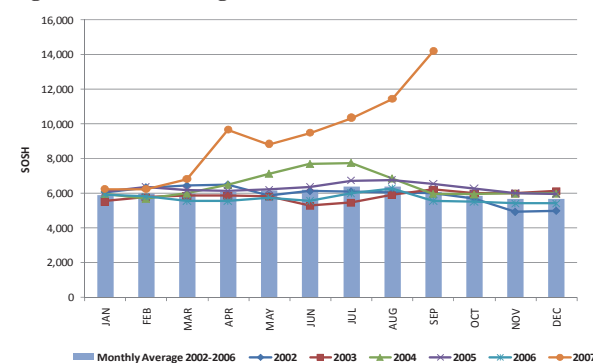
**Figure 4: Regional Trend in Terms of Trade: Cereal to Goat**



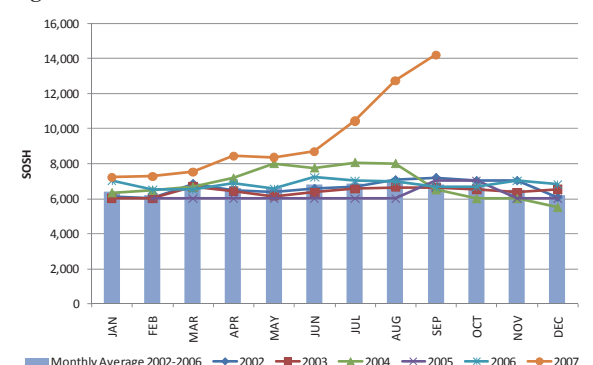
**Figure 5: Central: Trend in Imported Commodity Prices compared to Exchange Rate**



**Figure 6: Shabelle Region: Trend in Rice Prices**



**Figure 8: Central: Trend in Rice Prices**



## NUTRITION

Following the FSAU nutrition survey results from May 2007 in the Shabelle regions, FSAU conducted a rapid assessment in August and September using MUAC to monitor the situation. (See *September Nutrition Update for more information*). The current results indicate a continuing deterioration in Middle Shabelle Region, with an average of 25% of the children identified as acutely malnourished (MUAC <12.5cm); this was consistent across the livelihoods. Families reported food shortages and disease outbreak as the main causes of the elevated levels. In Lower Shabelle, the results indicated a more stable situation from May, with an average of 14% of children identified as acutely malnourished, again consistent across livelihoods, though with pockets of higher numbers reported in Kurtunwarey riverine areas. Finally, in the IDP settlements along the Mogadishu-Afgoye road, findings from Elasha, Lafole Arbis and Hawa Abdi reported less than 10% of children identified as acutely malnourished, with higher levels of 16.4% reported from the settlements at the Ministry of Agriculture faculty.



*FSAU's Nutrition Analyst, Mohamed Moalim, assesses oedema on the feet of a child in Lower Shabelle, Sept '07*

An integrated analysis of food security information, stratified by the nutritional status of the households, indicated the following:

**Middle Shabelle:** Higher proportions of households in Middle Shabelle were female-headed and split compared to the population in Afgoye IDP settlements and Lower Shabelle. In addition, 20% of households accessed food from food aid, compared to 75% in Afgoye. As a coping strategy, 100% of assessed household in Middle Shabelle resorted to less expensive food, reduced portions and numbers of meals whereas, 50-67% of assessed household in Lower Shabelle reported the same.

**Afgoye IDP population:** Households with acutely malnourished children had a higher reliance on relief assistance for food than those without acutely malnourished children. Although many households reported reducing meal frequency and switching to less expensive foods to meet their needs, this was most notably seen in households with severely malnourished children, with 90% of households reporting this practice.

**Lower Shabelle:** Similar to Middle Shabelle, households with severely malnourished children were more likely to be female-headed and split compared to families with no acutely malnourished children. These households were also more dependent on purchase of food rather than production, and were also more likely to be limiting portion sizes.

These results indicate specific nutritional vulnerabilities relating to female-headed and split households, as well as households with limited own production, currently relying on purchase for food. Given the continuing conflict and increasing market prices, the future food security situation for these households is uncertain, and needs close monitoring. FSAU with partners are planning to repeat the two May Shabelle region nutrition surveys at the end of October. In addition to updating the nutrition, health and food security information from the area, the survey results will make possible a direct comparison to the nutrition data collected in May.

FSAU and partners conducted three nutrition assessments in the northwest region in September 2007. The assessments were conducted in the protracted IDP camps in Hargeisa, Burao and Berbera. The results indicated serious levels of global acute malnutrition (GAM) in Hargeisa IDP camps, at **10.3%** (8.4-12.2) with **1.1%** (0.5-1.7) severe acute malnutrition (SAM). In Burao and Berbera protracted IDP camps, the results were more worrying, with critical rates of acute malnutrition reported in the exhaustive assessments conducted in both locations. In Berbera, **16% GAM** and **0.6% SAM** were reported, with **15.8% GAM** and **1.4% SAM** reported in Burao. Though high, these results are consistent with the results from other protracted IDP populations in other parts of the country such as Galkayo and Bossasso, highlighting the nutritional vulnerability of this group. More detailed information on these results is available in the September FSAU Nutrition Update.

## integrated phase classification map



FSAU/FEWSNET Market Data Update, October 2007  
FSAU/FEWSNET Climate Data Update, October 2007  
FSAU Nutrition Update, August/September, 2007  
FSAU Technical Series Post Gu '07 Analysis, September 21, 2007  
FSAU Press Release, August 13, 2007

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