

Sections



Agriculture



Displacements



International



West African



Food Security

- ◆ The rainfall situation has improved markedly in most parts of the region. However, some areas particularly the south of Benin, Ghana and Togo, northwest Mali, central Mauritania, northeast Niger and northwest Chad still experiencing rainfall deficits.
- Livestock remains affected by the long lean period especially in areas that have experienced delayed onset of the rainy season (southern Mauritania and Mali border, northern Senegal and eastern Chad).
- The improvement in rainfall has caused floods that affected many people in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger.
- Mauritania and northern Benin deterioration of the food and nutrition situation has been reported.
- Cereal availability was satisfactory in the Sahel with increased fears in the Gulf of Guinea due to El Niño.

The areas that experienced a late start of the agropastoral season have benefited from improved rainfall from the end of July. However, rain deficits, which could negatively affect agricultural activities and pastures in some areas, are still reported in northwest of Mali, central Mauritania, north-eastern Niger, southern Benin, Ghana and Togo and central Chad.

Rainfall since the end July has caused flooding in the region.

Deterioration in household food situation is observed in areas that experienced poor growing season in 2014-2015. In Mauritania, for example, the food and nutrition security situation is very alarming in Hodh Echarghi the Guidimakha and Gorgol. In Benin, a sizeable proportion of households in Karimama are food insecure due to the difficult lean season.

In markets, the availability of cereals remains satisfactory in the Sahel with relatively stable prices except around N'Djamena, while in the Gulf of Guinea the impact of rainfall deficit increases fears and affects food prices, which are on the rise.

Recommendations for regional partners

→ Advocate for timely funding of priority actions of the Sahel Humanitarian Appeal.

To go to

- → Monitor the evolution of avian influenza in the region and its impact on the rural and urban markets, and actors of the value-chain and households.
- → Monitor the meteorological situation and El Niño phenomenon.
- → Follow displaced populations from Northern Mali, Nigeria, and the Central African Republic.

Objective: Within the framework of the monthly meetings of the Regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group for West Africa, it has been agreed that, in a humanitarian perspective, FAO and WFP provide the group with highlights on the food security situation of the previous month.

2015-2016 Agropastoral campaign

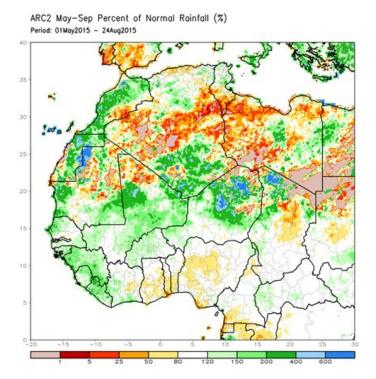


Marked improvement in rainfall in the region

Rainfall in July, relative to trends from the past decade has shown marked improvement in the rainfall situation and therefore water supplies have improved crop development throughout much of West Africa and Sahel.

The precipitation percentage analysis, when compared to normal trends (Figure 1) since the beginning of the rainy season, shows surpluses ranging between 80 and 200 percent in Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Sierra Leone, western-central Mali, east-central Mauritania, central Niger and northwest Chad. However, precipitation deficits that could negatively affect agricultural activities and pastures in some areas are still reported in northwest Mali, central Mauritania, north-east Niger, south Benin, Ghana, Togo and central Chad.

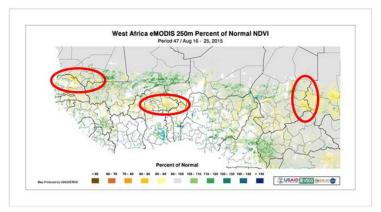
Figure 1: Percentage of rainfall compared to normal levels between 1st May and 24th August 2015



Source: NOAA

The pastoral situation has shown improvement with the rainfall recorded during the last 10 days of July and the first 20 days of August 2015. The improved rains allowed the regeneration and filling of water points for livestock watering. However, in some regions the situation is still not normal and livestock remains affected by the long lean period, especially in areas that have experienced a delayed installation of the rainy season and dry spells (e.g. borders of Burkina Faso and northern Benin,

Figure 2: Vegetation index anomaly in West Africa from 16 to 25 August



Source: USGS

between southern Mauritania and Mali, northern Senegal and eastern Chad) (Figure 2).

Heavy rains in late July-early August caused flooding in some areas across the region with 83,843 people affected and over 600 hectares of crops destroyed. The most affected countries are Guinea (29,599 persons), Burkina Faso (20,346 persons) and Niger (20, 089 persons).

The H5N1 avian influenza continues to spread in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. In Nigeria, updates as of August 20, 2015 indicate that the number of outbreaks increased from 459 to 470 and the birds at risk reached 1.66 million versus the previous 1.48 million at the date of August 5th, 2015. In Côte d'Ivoire, the number of new outbreaks is 3, bringing the total country outbreaks to 6 in the areas of Lagunes, Abidjan, Bassam and Bouaké. In Ghana, 5 new outbreaks were identified bringing the total number to 23 in the region of Greater Accra. (FAO Animal Health H5N1 Empres-status update August 20, 2015).

The locust situation is currently calm. Good rains fell in most of the Sahel summer breeding areas. Consequently, small-scale breeding will occur causing a slight increase in locust numbers in all countries. FAO



Population movement: situation in the region

Living conditions increasingly difficult in IDP sites

The security situation continues to deteriorate in Nigeria and neighboring countries. The conditions in IDP sites are becoming more and more difficult with urgent needs remaining unmet in most sectors. In Niger, the Diffa region in the southeast of Niger, especially near the border with Nigeria, has become

more at risk of insurgent attacks with the departure of Nigerian and Chadian troops from northeastern Nigeria, due to the rainy season. In this context, several incidents have occurred and have triggered new waves of forced displacement in Niger. **UNHCR**



Population movement: situation in the region (continued)

Living conditions increasingly difficult in IDP sites

In Cameroon, with the deterioration of the security situation in the Extreme-North marked by the suicide bombings in Fotokol and Maroua, the number of refugees has reached 57,376 people, of which over 78 percent are in the Minawao camp. **UNHCR**

In Chad, thousands of people fearing attacks continue to flee their villages in the Lake Chad region. Many are sleeping in makeshift shelters, lacking food and basic services. The total number of displaced Chadians in the Lake region has now reached more than 40 000 people. OCHA

In Mali, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) of July 2015 shows that the continued decline in the number of internally displaced people rose from 90,218 IDPs in June 2015 to 78,183 in July 2015. The worsening of the security situation in northern areas, following attacks by armed groups, has caused the displacement of 40,879 persons. DTM



Trends on international markets

The FAO price index of food products at its lowest level since September 2009

Food consumption in most countries of West Africa and Sahel depends on imports of commodities (especially rice and wheat), the prices of which are traded on international markets.

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 164.6 points in July 2015, down 1.7 points (1.0 percent) from June and almost 40 points (19.4 percent) less than in July 2014. At its current level, the Index has reached its lowest monthly value since September 2009. Last month's decline reflected sharp drops in the prices of dairy products and vegetable oils, which more than offset some increases in the prices of sugar and cereals. Meat prices held steady.

The FAO Cereal Price Index averaged 166.5 points in July, up 3.3 points (2.0 percent) from June, but still 18.7 points (10.1 percent) below July last year. For the second consecutive month, strong wheat and maize quotations kept the cereal index rising, while rice prices fell. Unfavourable weather in North America and Europe caused a surge in international prices of wheat and major coarse grains during the first half of July, much of which was eroded in the second half as weather prospects improved. Rice prices remained on a falling trend, reflecting intense exporter competition for markets amid weak import demand.

In July, the world rice prices have shown mixed trends. In Vietnam and Pakistan, prices fell under the strong competition among Asian exporters. In contrast, Thai prices were firmer, earlier this month, because of the prospects of recovering Asian imports. Crops in Southeast Asia may be less important than expected because of the drought. However, the export surplus still remains abundant and the overall delay in the external sales continue to weigh on international prices. Trend changes

could intervene during the fourth quarter when estimates of crops and import demands are more accurate. In Africa and the Middle East, imports are also expected to reactivate, then strengthening international prices. InterRice





Source : FAO



Market trends in West Africa

Sufficient availability of cereals in the Sahel, increased fears in the Gulf of Guinea due to El Niño

While cereal availability remains satisfactory in the region, this 2015 crop season takes place in an El Niño year that will peak at year's end. Historically, there are strong correlations between El Niño and seasonal rainfall deficits, particularly in marginal areas of the region.

In Mauritania, prices of local cereals such as millet, sorghum and local maize, saw increases during the first half of 2015 due to the early onset of the lean season. This upward trend negatively impacts food access of the most vulnerable households. The increase reached 22 percent for millet in June,

compared to the same period of last year and is in average 13.4 percent higher for the first half 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. This upward trend which started in April 2015 is not only seasonal but is also a sign of a supply decline of local cereal products due to decreased cross border trade with Mali. (WFP Mauritania, August 2015).



Sufficient availability of cereals in the Sahel, increased fears in the Gulf of Guinea due to El Niño

In Chad, following the Boko Haram attacks in Ngouboua in the Lake region in February, cross border trade came to a complete halt with Nigeria. In August a gradual recovery of trade is observed between the two countries via Niger. Pasta, sugar, and soap is being traded currently from Nigeria. This year's supply problems have led to major consequences on prices. There has been an important maize price increase in October, for example, from the beginning of the consumer campaign. Since then, prices remained above those of last year and the five year average for the same period despite the arrival of the off-season harvest. Currently, the price of corn per kilogram in Bol in the Lake region is being sold at 250 against 220 CFA francs in 2014 and 192 CFA francs on average over the last five years in the same period. Production areas in the Lake region such as Tchoukoutalia, Ngouboua are also experiencing price increases (WFP Chad, August 2015).

In Mali, the supply of dry cereal in rural markets decreased during the month of July 2015 compared to June 2015 (Source: Observatoire du Marché Agricole). The offer is down by 23 percent for millet, by 19 percent for sorghum, by 33 percent for corn, by 35 percent for Gambiaka local rice. The main reason for this decrease in dry cereal supply in rural markets is the beginning of the lean season in the agricultural zone. The consumer price of dry cereals saw a general upward trend during the month of July 2015 compared to June. Some declines were observed in the markets of Timbuktu for local rice and maize, as well as in the markets of Mopti for imported rice. (WFP, Market Bulletin, July 2015).

In Ghana, the late rains delayed the schedule of agricultural activities in the northern regions. Thus, the harvest will be delayed by several weeks pushing households to turn to markets. Indeed, over 60 percent of households have already exhausted their stocks. Meanwhile, corn prices rose beyond 50 percent relative to its value of January 2015. (WFP Ghana Food Security Update, July 2015).

In Burkina Faso and Niger, markets are well supplied and, in consequence, prices remain relatively stable. Afrique Verte. In Côte d'Ivoire, there could be a sharp drop in the cocoa harvest, an estimated decrease of 50,000 tons compared to 1.75 million according to Rabobank International. The first cause is the lack of rainfall and there are fears of losses at the farm gate level and lower demand on the market due to higher processing costs. On July 15, the price per ton reached its highest level (3,409 USD) from the Ivorian crisis of 2011. (Source: International Cocoa Organization)

In Sierra Leone, the President announced the lift of many restrictive measures taken against the Ebola outbreak. Public gatherings are allowed, including the reopening of markets, except on Sunday. This should allow business activities to resume.

In Nigeria, while the availability of grain is good in most of states, markets in urban centers of the Northeast are performing poorly, which is also affecting cross-border markets. FEWS NET

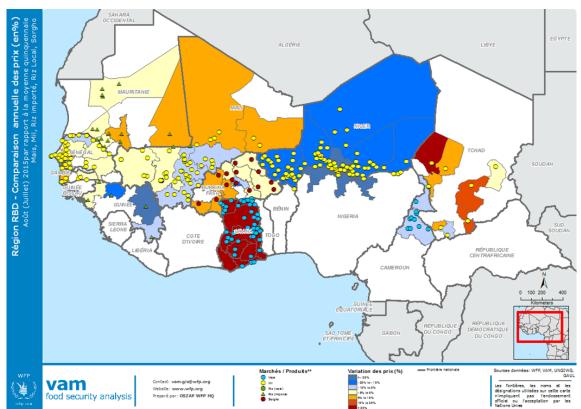


Figure 4 : Comparison (in %) of monthly prices from August (July) 2015 relative to the five year average (maize, millet, imported rice, local rice, sorghum)

Source : PAM

Impact on food security



Lean season difficult for households that experienced a poor 2014-2015 harvest

In July 2015, in **Benin**, WFP along with the Government started a system for Monitoring Food Security (Food Security Monitoring Systems (FSMS)) at Karimama and Malanville located in the Far North of Alibori Region. These two municipalities have been identified as highly vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition by the various assessments in the country. The data collection period for this first round coincided with Ramadan. Preliminary results of this survey showed that 17 percent of households are moderately food insecure Karimama and 3 percent in Malanville. A crop deficit in 2014, which resulted in higher cereals prices and rising food costs, could serve to explain the food insecurity observed in Karimama. (MAP, INS, ONASA, FSMS Benin, July 2015).

In Chad, the results of the survey of Food Security Monitoring Systems show that the food situation is not worrying in the southern Sudan region despite some difficulties related to seasonality. The availability of raw crops such as green peanut, cassava, corn and eggplant and also remaining stocks allow some households to access food. In the Sahelian west-central area, the food situation is not alarming but continues to deteriorate in some localities with a worsening nutritional situation. Assistance programs are already underway in most regions; which will reduce food access problem for poor households. In eastern and northern Sahelian zone, foods consumed by households mostly come shopping in the markets and gardening for some households. The food availability and diversity of sources allow households two to three meals a day, depending on the level of vulnerability. (FSMS Chad, July 2015).

In Mauritania, in July 2015, the food security monitoring survey show that 26.8 percent of Mauritanian households are food insecure. Food insecurity is more pronounced in rural than urban areas, where the most affected are wilayas: Hodh Echarghi (44.1 percent) Guidimakha (37.4 percent) and Gorgol (30.1 percent). A general deterioration in the situation of households in the country is also noted. All the wilayas except Nouadhibou have rates above 20 percent of food insecurity, which is relatively high. Compared to last year, the situation has deteriorated sharply in the wilayas of Brakna, Trarza and northern countries that have not received any emergency food assistance since the beginning of the year. (FSMS Mauritania, July 2015).

Following the results of food security surveys in northern **Ghana**, the delay of the rainy season is expected to lead to deteriorated household food security due to low production of the 2014-2015 season. In the Upper East Region, an estimated 75 percent of households have already exhausted their food stocks and are currently dependent on market purchases. This proportion is estimated at over 60 percent in the northern region, while about 70 percent of households are involved in Upper West Region. Thus, during a time when access to food depends increasingly on markets that have high prices, a significant proportion of households in the three northern regions continue to suffer of food insecurity until the early harvests. (WFP Ghana Food Security Update, July 2015).

Extreme-North Cameroon preliminary results EFSA, June 2015

- About 4 in 10 households, about 28 percent of surveyed households, are moderately food insecure and 10 percent severely food insecure.
- The results of this survey reveal higher rates of food insecurity for Nigerian refugees (46 percent) and internally displaced persons (IDPs) (44 percent), versus about 23 percent for the host population.
- The emergency strategies are more frequently adopted by IDPs (46 percent), including begging and the movement of all household members. The use of these strategies may want to indicate that these households have exhausted the most accessible strategies. Nigerian refugees' rather greater use of stress strategies (33 percent) as borrowing money, the expense of savings and sale of household goods.
- Food insecurity affects mainly the poorest households with very few assets, livestock; or those who do not have access to land for agriculture. The majority of Nigerian refugees and IDPs do not have access to land for farming last year (respectively 99 percent and 84 percent) against 35 percent in the local community. Moreover, these Nigerian refugees and IDPs do not possess animals (88 percent against 45 percent have among locals).
- Returning has not yet been considered as an option for more than half of the displaced (53 percent of IDPs and 60 percent of Nigerian refugees not planning to return).
- We note a decline in the practice of traditional ways of life of the population surveyed. Indeed, last year, more than half of IDPs (52 percent), 44 percent of Nigerian refugees and 38 percent of the local population were agro-pastoralists. However, this year rather precarious activities including petty trade, the exploitation of natural resources, aid and donations have grown for all groups.
- In general, prices of major agricultural products experienced an increase in June 2015 compared to June 2014 in the visited markets. Overall, poor harvests recorded in the Far North region in the last crop year together with the disruption of trade and the current high demand may all explain the procedure.
- Food aid, health and support in the agriculture activities remain priority needs according to the affected populations.

Calendars!



- → Training of country trainers on the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) in Niamey, Niger from August 25 to 28;
- → Training on indicators of the CH in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from September 10 to 12;
- Meeting on Regional System for the Prevention of Food Crisis (PREGEC) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from September 14 to 16;
- Special session of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) in Milan (Expo Milan 2015) from October 29 to 30;
- → Crop Assessment Missions:
 - ♦ Coastal countries: September 28 to October 2
 - ♦ Nigeria: October 19 to 23
 - ♦ Sahel countries: November 2 to 6
- → Analysis workshop on the CH:
 - ♦ Coastal countries: October 8 to 9
 - ♦ Nigeria: October 26 to 30, consolidation at the federal level: November 2 to 6
 - ♦ Sahel countries: November 9 to 14
- → Regional summary of the CH in Niamey, Niger from November 16 to 20;
- → Meeting PREGEC in Niamey, Niger from November 23 to 25;
- Meeting on RPCA in Dakar from December 14 to 15;
- Training on market analysis tools, Dakar from December 7 to 11;
- Regional Learning Workshop on Preparedness Cash, Dakar from 30 November to 2 December;
- → Workshop on cash in the livelihoods, Ouagadougou from October 19 to 20.

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