Favourable weather conditions allow normal progress of 2018 cropping season

Following the timely onset of seasonal rains, planting of the 2018 main season maize and yams crops in the south started in February/March. Rice, to be harvested from September, was planted in April. Planting operations for millet and sorghum, to be harvested from October, have just been completed. Land preparation and the early planting of the minor season maize, to be harvested from December, have just started and will be completed in September. The cumulative rainfall amounts since February have been average to above average in most areas and advanced tilling stages are already observed for cereals. Weeding activities are underway in most planted areas.

Owing to a good rainy season, the grazing and water situation for livestock are deemed favourable. Setting up of artificial pastures are on progress since 2012 to supplement natural pastures and limit pasture competition among pastoralists.

Above-average cereal production harvested in 2017

The 2017 agricultural season was characterized by favourable weather conditions in terms of timely and well-distributed rains as well as continued Government support in terms of distribution of seeds and tools. Despite some localized outbreaks of pests, including Fall Armyworm, the country’s aggregate cereal output in 2017 was estimated at about 3.3 million tonnes, about 12 percent above the five-year average. Compared to the average, rice output increased by about 9 percent, while maize increased by 15 percent. Most farming households benefited from higher income due to increased opportunities for casual labour and/or larger sales of agricultural surpluses.
Sustained economic growth and increasing inflation rate

According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), the economy grew at about 7.8 percent in 2017, driven mostly by agriculture. Although growth is expected to slightly slow down at 7.4 percent in 2018, it will remain sustained due to continued foreign and Government investment in rural infrastructure, transport and energy sectors, the aid inflows, the Government’s pro-business reforms, a relatively stable political context and oil and gas production. In 2018, the year-on-year inflation is forecast at 0.7 percent, up from 0.5 percent reported in 2017, due to strong economic growth and higher global commodity and oil prices.

Favourable food security conditions due to satisfactory supply following 2017 good harvests

The food security conditions are generally favourable due to adequate food consumption and relatively stable livelihoods for most households. According to the March 2018 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, there was no population estimated to be food insecure as reported in previous analysis at the end of 2017. However, about 428 000 people (6 percent of the total population) are estimated to be in IPC Phase 2; “Stressed” and need interventions to strengthen their resilience or protect their livelihoods.

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