



# GIEWS Country Brief Uganda

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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Below-average 2021 first season cereal harvest gathered in bi-modal rainfall areas**
- **Delayed and reduced 2021 harvest expected in Karamoja Region**
- **Despite recent increases, prices of maize still at low levels due to adequate availabilities**
- **Food security situation affected by reintroduction of COVID-19-related restrictions and by crop production shortfalls**

## Below-average 2021 first season cereal harvest gathered in bi-modal rainfall areas

In bi-modal rainfall areas covering most of the country, harvesting of the 2021 first season crops is about to be concluded with about a one-month of delay and production is estimated at below-average levels. The March-June rains were characterized by an erratic spatial and temporal distribution and by a delayed onset, with severe early season dryness reported especially in northern Acholi and Lango subregions, in northeastern Teso subregion and in northwestern West Nile subregion. Here, only scattered rains were received in March, delaying planting and affecting crop germination. Seasonal rains established in April but remained at below-average levels during most of the cropping season, severely affecting yields. According to FAO's Agricultural Stress Index (ASI), as of mid-June, severe drought conditions affected cropland in several eastern and northern districts. In central and southern areas, rains had a better performance but were still below average, with a negative impact on vegetation conditions and yields in some districts.

In July, torrential rains in western and northern areas caused the overflow of the Nyamwamba River in the Western Region and of Lake Kyoga in the Northern Region, which resulted in losses of lives, damage to infrastructure and localized crop losses.

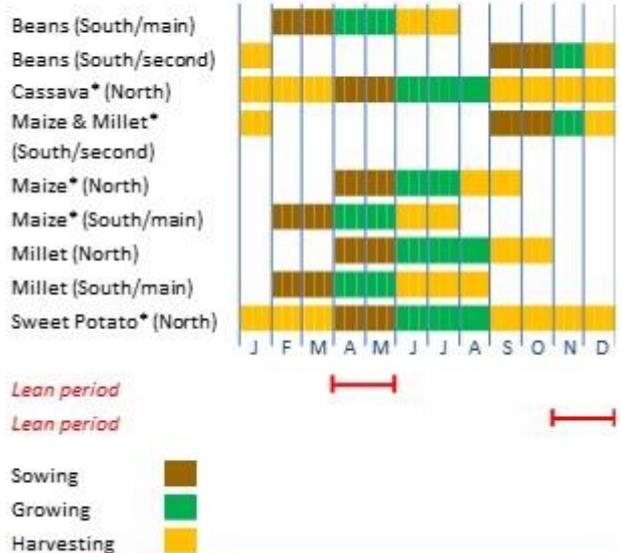
## Delayed and reduced harvest expected in Karamoja Region

In the uni-modal rainfall agro-pastoral Karamoja Region, the onset of the April-September rainy season was delayed by about three weeks, with a negative impact on crop planting and germination. Heavy rains in the first two dekads of May triggered flooding and waterlogging, especially in Napak and Kotido districts, and were followed by below-average rainfall in late May

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Crop Calendar

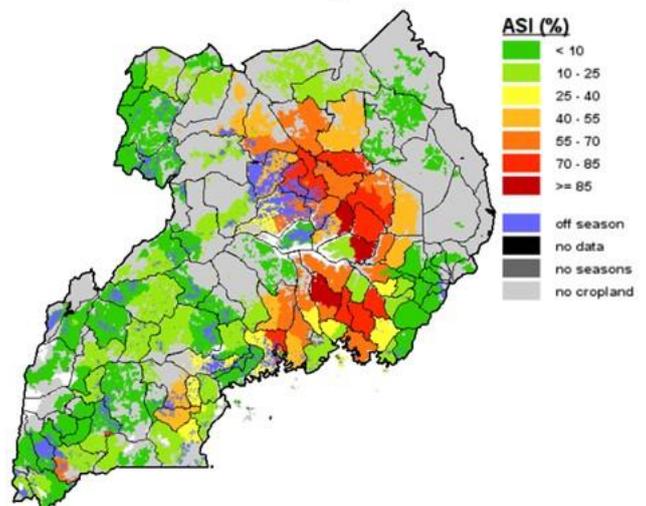
(\*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

### Uganda - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)

from start of season 1 to dekad 2, June 2021



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

and in June, resulting in the wilting of sorghum and maize crops. Above-average rains in July improved vegetation conditions but the improvement was short lived, as rains were again below-average in August. In addition, as several farmers did not have the financial capacity to buy seeds to replant after the floods, planted area is below average. As a result, the harvest will start in September, with about a one-month of delay, and crop production is expected at below-average levels.

The poor seasonal rains had a negative impact also on rangeland conditions, currently at below-average levels, and on pasture availability. In addition, the closure of livestock markets following the reintroduction of COVID-19-related restrictions in late June and insecurity, are constraining livestock production activities. It is reported that several households altered their livestock grazing patterns to congregate in areas safe from raids, resulting in localized overgrazing.

### Prices of maize still at low levels despite recent increases due to adequate availabilities

Prices of maize seasonally increased by 15 to 25 percent between January and February. Subsequently, prices levelled off or declined between March and April due to reduced exports to Kenya, the country's main export destination, where an import ban was introduced in March due to concerns over the presence of mycotoxin in grains. After the removal of the ban in May, the upward trend of prices resumed, with seasonal patterns compounded by concerns over the performance of the first season harvest, and maize prices increased by 25 to 40 percent between May and June. Despite these increases, June prices were still 10 to 20 percent below their year-earlier levels due to adequate carryover stocks from the above-average 2020 cereal output and to the lingering impact of the measures implemented to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, which constrained livelihood opportunities and resulted in declining purchasing power depressing domestic demand since early 2020.

In the agro-pastoral, cereal deficit Karamoja Region, prices of sorghum, the main staple in the area, surged by up to 35 percent between April and May in Nakapiripirit, Kaabong, Napak and Kotido markets, as seasonal patterns were reinforced by unfavourable prospects for the local harvests and by concerns over the performance of the first season harvests in neighbouring northern bi-modal rainfall areas. In the same period, prices of goats declined by 15 to 20 percent in Moroto, Nakapiripirit, and Kaabong markets, mainly due to heightened insecurity disrupting trade flows and reducing market activity. The increase of sorghum prices, coupled with the decline of goat prices, resulted in a sharp deterioration of the terms of trade for pastoralists, with a negative impact on their food access.

### Food security situation affected by reintroduction of COVID-19-related restrictions and by crop production shortfalls

Most rural bi-modal rainfall areas are food secure, with IPC Phase 1 (Minimal) food security conditions prevailing. However, in some northern areas where reduced first season harvests were gathered due to unfavourable weather, poor households are facing IPC Phase 2 (Stressed) food security conditions, with a minimally adequate food consumption and unable to meet some essential non-food needs.

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### Cereal Production

|              | 2015-2019 average | 2019         | 2020 estimate | change 2020/2019 |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|
|              | 000 tonnes        |              |               | percent          |
| Maize        | 2 647             | 2 575        | 2 750         | 6.8              |
| Sorghum      | 400               | 400          | 400           | 0.0              |
| Rice (paddy) | 232               | 220          | 200           | -9.1             |
| Others       | 249               | 260          | 262           | 0.8              |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>3 527</b>      | <b>3 455</b> | <b>3 612</b>  | <b>4.5</b>       |

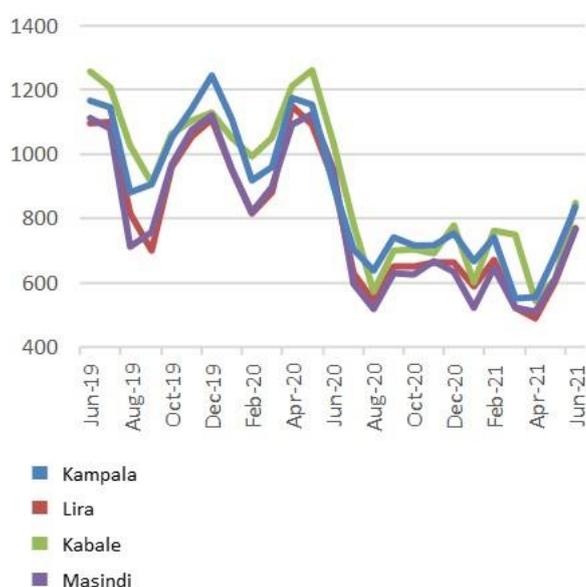
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

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### Wholesale prices of maize

Uganda Shilling per kg



Source: FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool.

In urban areas, where poor households rely on their daily wages obtained through casual labour, petty trading, food vending, construction activities and domestic work, the reintroduction in late June of several restrictions aimed to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the deterioration of the food security situation. Due to a sharp decline in incomes, several poor households are currently estimated to be in IPC Phase 2 (Stressed) food security conditions, with the worst affected facing IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) levels of food insecurity, characterized by food consumption gaps.

In the Karamoja Region, according to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, about 188 000 people (16 percent of the population) are estimated to be severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 [Crisis] and Phase 4 [Emergency]) in the period August 2021 to January 2022. This figure indicates a substantial improvement if compared to the lean season period March to July 2021, mainly due to seasonal improvements in food availability, and it is similar to the situation of one year earlier. However, the latest IPC analysis was conducted before the reintroduction of the COVID-19-related restrictions, which had a negative impact on livelihood activities, including livestock and charcoal sales. As a result, there is concern that the current severity and prevalence of food insecurity may be higher.

As of end-July 2021, the country hosted about 1.5 million refugees, including about 930 000 people from South Sudan and about 435 000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and they largely rely on humanitarian assistance.

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Projection August 2021-January 2022

