Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 22-May-2025

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Planting of 2025 maize crop expected to start in late May**
- **Cereal output in 2024 estimated at above-average level**
- **Prices of cereals above their year-earlier levels**
- **About 244 000 people acutely food insecure during 2025 lean season**

Planting of 2025 maize crop expected to start in late May

Planting operations of the 2025 maize crop are expected to start in late May, while planting of the 2025 rice, millet and sorghum crops is expected to begin in June with the establishment of the seasonal rains. Weather forecasts point to below-average rainfall amounts between May and July, which may affect planting operations and the establishment of early-planted crops.

In pastoral areas, seasonal dry weather conditions are prevailing. However, pasture conditions are still above average, as rangeland resources were adequately regenerated during the past June to October rainy season.

Cereal output in 2024 estimated at above-average level

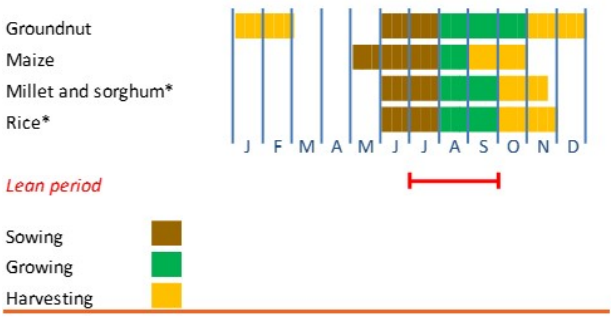
The 2024 aggregate cereal production is officially estimated at about 125 000 tonnes, about 14 percent above the average of the previous five years. The enhanced government support, including a timely provision of seeds and fertilizers at subsidized prices, enabled farmers to expand the area planted and boosted production across the country. However, some dry spells affected yields in Upper River Region and Central River Region. Furthermore, heavy rains between July and September 2024 triggered flooding in some regions, which resulted in localized crop losses.

Prices of cereals above their year-earlier levels

Prices of locally produced rice and millet were about 10 percent higher on a yearly basis in March 2025, while prices of maize were about 20 percent above their year-earlier levels. The elevated prices of cereals were mostly due to the weakness of the local currency and the high level of transport costs.

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Gambia

Cereal Production

	2019-2023 average	2023	2024 estimate	change 2024/2023
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	43	57	53	-7.7
Millet	40	42	40	-2.9
Maize	19	26	26	0.1
Others	6	5	6	16.7
Total	109	129	125	-3.7

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

About 244 000 people acutely food insecure during 2025 lean season

According to the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH) analysis, about 244 000 people (10 percent of the analyzed population) are projected to face acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) during the June to August 2025 lean season period, including over 7 600 people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency). This represents a slight deterioration compared to the same period in 2024, when nearly 227 000 people (9 percent of the analyzed population) were estimated to be acutely food insecure.

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:
FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS) https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/.
FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool https://fpma.fao.org/.
FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/.
Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) https://www.ipcinfo.org/.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 17-February-2025

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Cereal production in 2024 forecast at above-average level**
- **About 132 000 people acutely food insecure during the last quarter of 2024**

Cereal production in 2024 forecast at above-average level

Harvesting of the 2024 coarse grain and rice crops concluded last November. The rainy season, which normally extends from June to October, was characterized by a poor start. An erratic temporal distribution until August, with dry spells in June, affected planting operations and the germination of early planted crops, in particular in the Upper River Region and parts of the Central River Region. However, rainfall improved from August onwards and above-average rainfall amounts between September and mid-October improved vegetation conditions, supporting crop establishment and development in most parts of the country, and allowing crops to complete their growing cycle.

The enhanced government support, including a timely provision of seeds and subsidized fertilizers, boosted yields across the country and enabled farmers to expand the area planted.

The 2024 aggregate cereal production is forecast at 125 000 tonnes, about 15 percent above the 2023 level and 20 percent above the average of the previous five years.

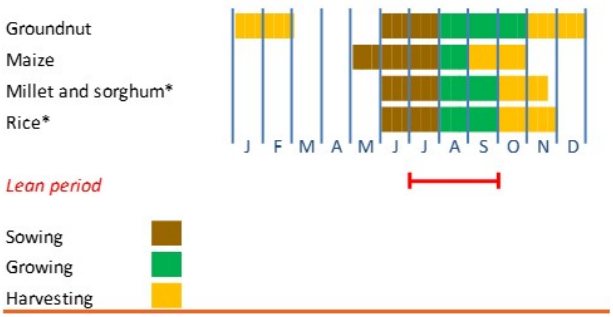
About 132 000 people acutely food insecure during the last quarter of 2024

According to the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH) analysis, about 132 000 people (5 percent of the analyzed population) were estimated to face acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 [Crisis]) between October and December 2024. This shows a slight improvement compared to the same period in 2023, when nearly 153 000 people (6 percent of the analyzed population) were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance.

There are concerns about the food security situation of approximately 9 700 people, whose livelihoods have been significantly disrupted by flooding in September 2024.

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Gambia

Cereal Production

	2019-2023 average	2023	2024 forecast	change 2024/2023
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	41	46	54	15.4
Millet	39	37	43	16.2
Maize	18	21	24	12.0
Others	6	5	5	10.0
Total	105	109	125	14.8

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

During the 2025 June-to-August lean season period, nearly 244 000 people (10 percent of the analyzed population) are projected to be acutely food insecure, including about 7 600 people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency).

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 30-May-2024

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Planting of 2024 maize underway**
- **Above-average cereal production in 2023**
- **Annual inflation rate still at high level**
- **About 227 000 people projected to be acutely food insecure during the 2024 lean season**

Planting of 2024 maize underway

Planting operations of the 2024 maize crop, to be harvested from September, have recently started. Sowing of rice, millet and sorghum, to be harvested in October and November, is expected to begin in June. The latest weather forecast by the Forum on Seasonal Forecasts of Agro-hydro-climatic Characteristics of the Rainy Season for Sudanian and Sahelian Zones of West Africa (PRESASS) points to average to above-average cumulative rainfall amounts between June and August, which are expected to benefit germination and early development of crops.

Above-average cereal production in 2023

Harvesting operations of the 2023 cereal crops concluded last November. Aggregate 2023 cereal production is estimated at about 127 000 tonnes, 19 percent above the 2022 level and 28 percent higher than the average of the previous five years, reflecting a generally favourable rainfall distribution and an expansion of the planted area. Furthermore, the timely availability of fertilizers and its increased use boosted cereal yields.

Annual inflation rate still at high level

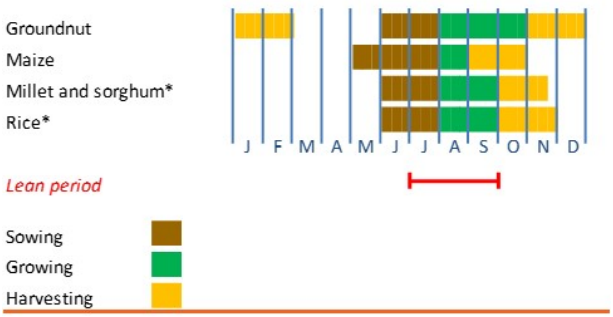
According to the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS), the annual inflation rate eased to 15 percent in March 2024, after reaching a peak of 19 percent in September 2023. The high inflation largely reflects sustained high food prices, with the year-on-year food inflation rate estimated at 19.7 percent in March 2024, due to elevated prices of imported food and fuel, and the depreciation of the national currency. In March 2024, the dalasi was equivalent to GMD 67.9/USD 1 compared to GMD 61.7/USD 1 in March 2023. In addition, the rise in domestic utility tariffs contributed to the high level of inflation.

About 227 000 people projected to be acutely food insecure during the 2024 lean season

According to the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH) analysis, nearly 227 000 people (9 percent of the analyzed population) are

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Gambia

Cereal Production

	2018-2022 average	2022	2023 estimate	change 2023/2022
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	38	37	42	14.0
Rice (paddy)	37	45	55	22.8
Maize	18	21	26	23.4
Others	7	4	5	8.0
Total	100	106	127	19.3

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

projected to face acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) during the next lean season, between June and August 2024, including about 1 600 people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency). This shows a significant decrease in the number of acutely food insecure people compared to the same period in 2023, when about 320 000 people (13 percent of the analyzed population) were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. The projected improvement of the situation is mainly due to an above-average cereal production harvested in 2023. Furthermore, positive prospects for national economic growth and enhanced income-earning opportunities are expected to improve households' capacity to access food, despite high food inflation.

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Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) https://www.ipcinfo.org/.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 12-October-2023

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Cereal production in 2023 forecast at above-average level**
- **Prices of coarse grains significantly higher year-on-year**
- **About 320 000 people acutely food insecure during 2023 lean season**

Cereal production in 2023 forecast at above-average level

Harvesting of the 2023 maize, millet, sorghum and rice crops is currently underway in most areas of the country and is expected to be concluded by November. Official sources point to a generally good performance of the 2023 cropping season due to overall favourable weather conditions during the June-October rainy season. However, below-average rains at start of the cropping season and some dry spells in August have likely resulted in localized crop production shortfalls, especially in parts of Lower River, Central River and Upper River regions.

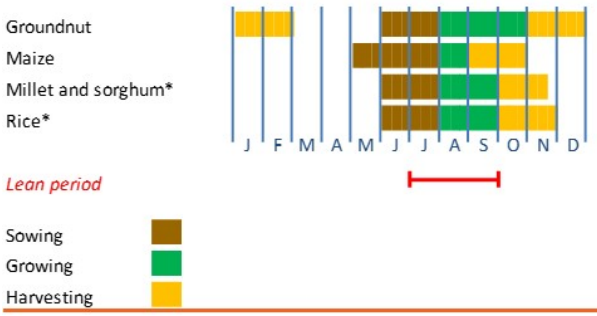
The 2023 aggregate cereal production is forecast at 116 000 tonnes, 8 percent above the previous year's level and 16 percent above the five-year average, reflecting the overall conducive weather conditions, the year-on-year increase in planted area and the provision of subsidized fertilizers by the government, which is expected to boost yields.

Prices of coarse grains significantly higher year-on-year

Between January and May 2023, retail prices of locally produced millet increased by 20 to 50 percent, while prices of local maize rose by 35 to 75 percent in different markets across the country. Prices of both millet and maize were stable in June and July 2023 (latest available data). Prices of maize were 35 to 85 percent higher year-on-year in July, while prices of millet were 60 to 85 percent above their year-earlier levels in most markets. In the market of Farafenni, located in the North Bank Division that accounts for over 40 percent of the domestic production of millet, the price of millet was 25 percent higher on a yearly basis. High prices of coarse grains were mostly due to elevated fuel prices, which led to increased transport costs.

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Gambia

Cereal Production

	2018-2022 average	2022	2023 forecast	change 2023/2022
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	38	37	39	5.0
Rice (paddy)	37	45	50	11.0
Maize	18	20	21	6.0
Others	7	5	6	2.2
Total	100	107	116	7.5

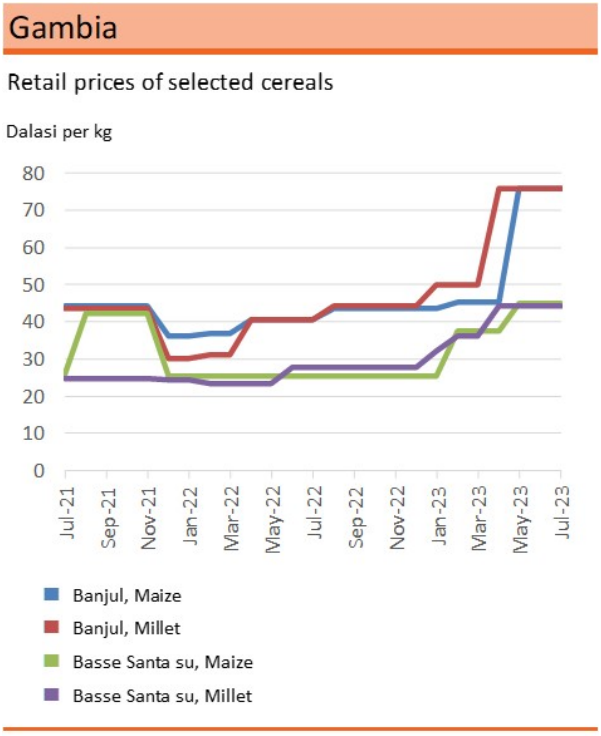
Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

About 320 000 people acutely food insecure during 2023 lean season

According to the latest “Cadre Harmonisé” (CH) analysis, nearly 320 000 people were estimated to face acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) during the lean season between June and August 2023, including about 20 000 people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency). This represents a deterioration compared to the previous year, when nearly 207 000 people were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance.

The year-on-year increase in acute food insecurity levels is mostly driven by the high food and non-food inflation coupled with low households’ purchasing power. In August 2023, the annual inflation rate was estimated at 18 percent, the highest level in nearly 20 years. High inflation was driven by high food prices, which registered a year-on-year increase of 24 percent in August 2023, elevated fuel prices and an upward revision of water and electricity prices in April 2023.

New CH estimates of the number of people facing acute food insecurity in the last quarter of 2023 are expected to be released by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in late November 2023.



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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 04-May-2021

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Land preparation for 2021 cropping season underway**
- **Below-average cereal production harvested in 2020**
- **Continued assistance needed for vulnerable people**

Land preparation for 2021 cropping season underway

Seasonal dry weather conditions are prevailing across the country and land preparation for the 2021 cropping season is underway. Planting operations for maize are expected to begin in May with the onset of the rains, while planting of irrigated rice, millet and sorghum, will start in June. The harvest of all cereal crops is expected to start in October.

In most pastoral areas, seasonal rains are expected to start in July. Despite the ongoing pastoral lean season, forage availability is overall satisfactory in the main grazing areas of the country. The animal health situation remains overall good and stable, with just some localized outbreaks of seasonal diseases, including Foot-and-Mouth disease, Pest Des Petit Ruminant, Contagious Bovine Pleurae Pneumonia and Newcastle disease for poultry.

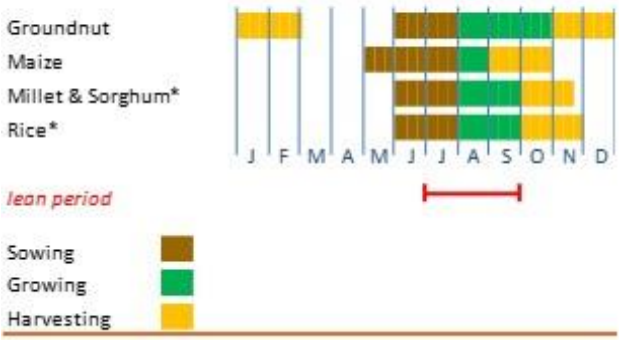
Below-average cereal production harvested in 2020

Despite the intervention by the Government and its partners in providing inputs to farmers, the 2020 national cereal production is estimated at 123 000 tonnes, about 9 percent below the average. Strong winds, flash floods and infestation of Fall Armyworms affected crops in some areas. However, the production in 2020 has improved compared to the last two years where the cropping season was characterized by unfavourable rains, with a late start in late July and prolonged break in rains in late August 2020. This resulted in delayed planting and germination failure of crops, leading to extra expenditures for farmers in both 2018 and 2019.

Imports account for over half of the national cereal utilization in the country. Rice accounts for about 70 percent of the overall cereal import requirements, followed by wheat, which accounts for about 20 percent. Import requirements for the 2020/21 (November/October) marketing year are forecast at an above-average level of 270 000 tonnes as local traders are aiming to replenish their stocks.

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Gambia

Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 estimate	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	53	35	55	57.1
Rice (paddy)	42	32	40	25.2
Maize	25	17	21	23.5
Others	17	7	8	7.1
Total	136	91	123	35.8

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Continued assistance needed for most vulnerable people

According to the March 2021 "*Cadre Harmonisé*" analysis, the aggregate number of severely food insecure people (CH Phase 3: “Crisis” and above) is estimated at about 65 000, down from the 82 000 people estimated in March 2020. If appropriate measures and responses are not implemented, this number is projected to increase to nearly 114 000 people during the next lean season between June and August 2021. The main drivers of food insecurity are the effects of adverse weather events (flooding and strong winds) and Fall Armyworm attacks on crops in some localized areas and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the value chain.

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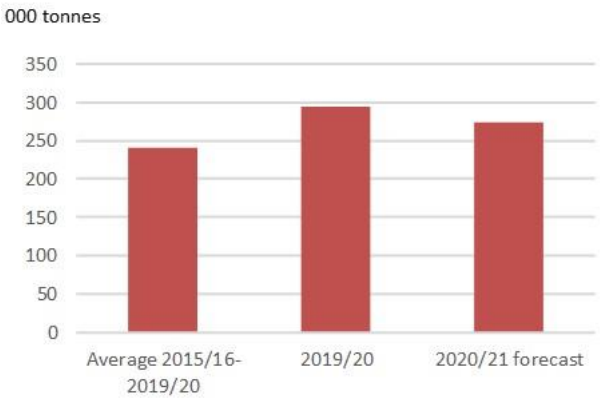
Gambia

Cereals Imports



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 05-May-2020

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **National weather forecast points to above-average cumulative rainfall in 2020**
- **Well below-average cereal production harvested in 2019**
- **Continued assistance needed for vulnerable people**

National weather forecast points to above-average cumulative rainfall in 2020

Seasonal dry weather conditions are prevailing in most areas of the country and planting of the 2020 crops is expected to begin in May for the maize crop and in June-July for the other crops, following the normal onset of rains.

According to the latest Forum on the Agro-Hydro-Climatic Seasonal Forecast in Sudano-Sahelian Africa (PRESASS), the June/October rainy season is likely to be characterized by above-average rainfall amounts and will continue until October. If this forecast materializes, it will contribute to a favourable agricultural production and the availability of pasture and water as well as good pastoral conditions.

In most pastoral areas, seasonal rains are expected to start in July. The pastoral lean season is ongoing and some localized pasture deficits are reported across the country, in particular in the areas which experienced a prolonged dry season and bush fires in 2019. In 2020, the livestock mortality rate has been high due to some outbreaks of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), *Pest Des Petit Ruminant* (PPR), Contagious Bovine Pleurae Pneumonia (CBPP) and New Castle Disease (NCD) for poultry.

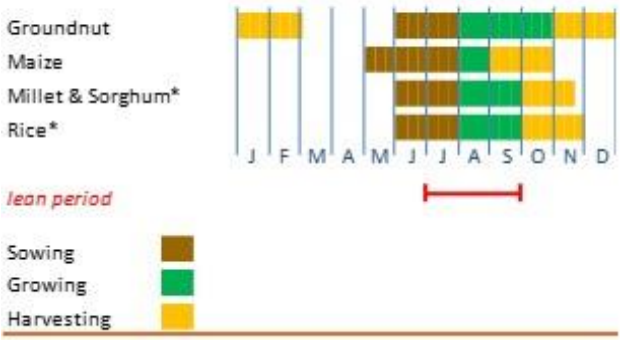
Well below-average cereal production harvested in 2019

Harvesting of the 2019 major crops, including millet, maize and rice (paddy), was completed last November. The 2019 national cereal production is estimated at 87 000 tonnes, 45 percent below average and 6 percent below the 2018 output. The 2019 cropping season was marked by unfavourable rains, with a late start in late July and prolonged breaks of the rains in late August. This resulted in delayed planting and germination failure of crops, leading to extra expenditures for farmers.

Imports account for over half of the national cereal utilization in the country. Rice accounts for about 70 percent of the overall cereal import requirement, followed by wheat, which accounts for

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Gambia

Cereal Production

	2014-2018 average	2018	2019 estimate	change 2019/2018
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	67	38	35	-8.0
Rice (paddy)	44	26	23	-14.0
Maize	28	18	17	-4.9
Others	20	10	12	21.1
Total	159	93	87	-6.1

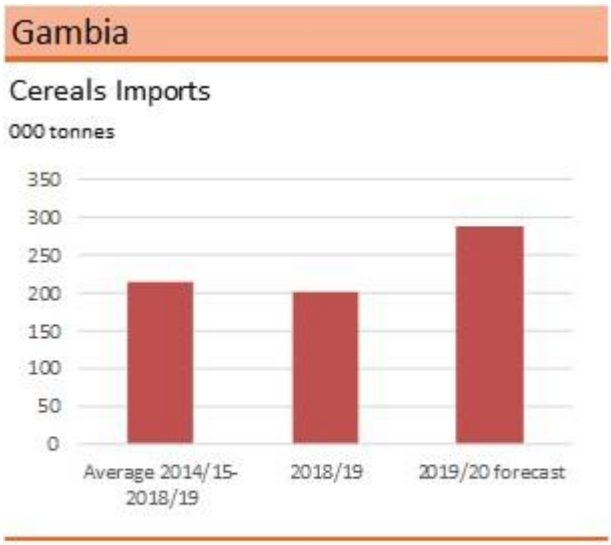
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

about 20 percent. Import requirements for the 2019/20 (November/October) marketing year are forecast at an above-average level of 290 000 tonnes as a result of high demand for human consumption.

Humanitarian assistance needed for most vulnerable people

According to the March 2020 "*Cadre Harmonisé*" analysis, the aggregate number of severely food insecure people (CH Phase 3: “Crisis” and above) is estimated at about 82 000 people, significantly up from the 46 000 estimated in March 2019. If appropriate measures and responses are not implemented, this number is projected to increase to nearly 136 000 people during the next lean season between June and August 2020, well above the about 89 000 food insecure people that were estimated for the same period in 2019. The deterioration of the food security situation is mainly due to the significant reduction in the 2019 production of groundnuts, the major cash crop, with consequent declines in households’ income and purchasing power. In addition, the country faces multiple stressors including climate change variability and decreased access to adequate and quality forage resources. These have far-reaching consequences for animal production and productivity. The delay in the start of rains and reduced amounts, negatively impacted on the biomass yields of pastures and quantity of water in the natural water catchment points for livestock production.

According to the National Emergency Response Plan, the country needs 2 710.7 tonnes of food commodities for the 22 073 highly vulnerable households from April to May 2020 and 16 867.6 tonnes for the 91 572 highly vulnerable and marginally food insecure households from June to August. In addition, it requires USD 21 157 116 mainly to support seeds, fertilizers, vegetables and livestock inputs. The FAO office in the Gambia has pledged programmatic support to the Response Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture in the form of agriculture inputs. The overall burden of acute malnutrition in 2020 was initially estimated at 33 283 (Moderate Acute Malnutrition [MAM] 42 676) out of the total population of 368 658 children 6-59 months old. Further analysis factoring the effect of food security and COVID-19 on malnutrition estimates the burden at 58 177 (MAM 47 276), marking a 75 percent increase in the estimated burden of the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) if there is no immediate intervention. The 21 percent of the GAM increase is due to food insecurity, while the increase due to the combined effect of food security and COVID-19 is estimated at 36 percent.



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

COVID-19 and measures adopted by the Government

In view of the evolving COVID-19 situation, the Government has decreed a Public Emergency through to 17 May 2020. The Government has taken some sanitary, social and economic measures. In addition, it has made available 2 000 tonnes of fertilizers to support farmers in the upcoming rainy season as well as measures for procurement and distribution of rice, sugar and refined cooking oil for vulnerable communities.

Payments of the 2019 tax returns for the retail and service sectors have been deferred for the first and second quarters of 2020.

In early April, the World Bank, through the International Development Association (IDA), approved a USD 10 million grant to strengthen the preparedness of the national health system in terms of prevention, detection and response to the threat posed by the virus. The European Commission has granted GMD 512 640 000 (EUR 9 million) of budget support to help the country to implement its responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mandatory restrictions on population movements, combined with heightened levels of fear, have led many people to remain at home. Although these measures have not affected the access to food, further restrictions on population movements may hamper the access to land and have a negative impact on the 2020 agricultural production.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 25-July-2019

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Late onset of rains delayed planting operations of 2019 crops**
- **Well below-average cereal production gathered in 2018**
- **Continued assistance needed for vulnerable people**

Late onset of rains delayed planting operations of 2019 crops

The 2019 cropping season has been marked by a late start of the ongoing rainy season. This has delayed planting operations of millet, rice, maize and sorghum crops, to be harvested from October. The low cumulative rainfall amounts since June resulted in poor crop germination rates and some replanting may be required.

Land preparation and planting operations for groundnuts, the major cash crop produced in the country, are ongoing and the harvest will start in November.

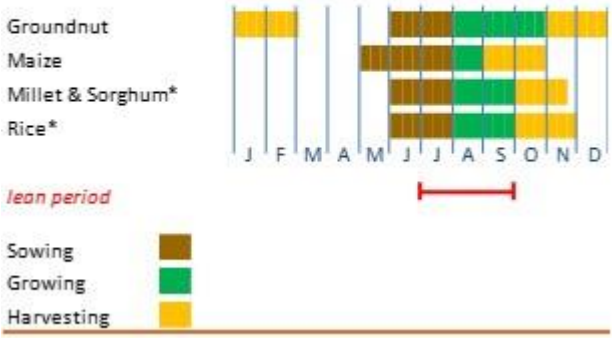
Well below-average harvest gathered in 2018

The 2018 agricultural season was characterized by late onsets of rains across all regions, prolonged and abnormal cessation of rains (three to four weeks) and outbreaks of Fall Armyworms. This has resulted in delayed planting or germination failure of crops that were often needed to be replanted with consequent extra costs for farmers. The 2018 national cereal production was estimated at 93 000 tonnes, about 50 percent below the average of the previous five years and 24 percent below the previous year's output. Groundnuts, the main cash crop, also declined by 54 percent compared to 2017 and 66 percent compared to the five-year average. Major declines were also observed in maize and millet production.

Imports account for over half of the national cereal utilization in the country. Rice accounts for about 70 percent of overall cereal import requirements, followed by wheat, which accounts for about 20 percent. Import requirements for the 2018/19 (November/October) marketing year are forecast at an above-average level of 250 000 tonnes. Following last year's production decline, the country built up substantial level of stocks with a record of rice imports. Consequently, imports in 2018/19 are expected to fall slightly compared to last year's record, as stocks will be drawn down to meet national food requirement.

Gambia

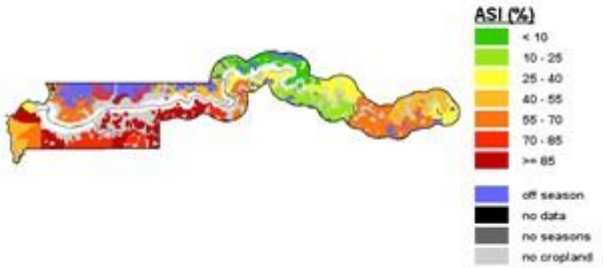
Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Gambia - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)

From start of season 1 to dekad 1, July 2019



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

Gambia

Cereal Production

	2013-2017 average	2017	2018 estimate	change 2018/2017
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	77	52	38	-26.3
Rice (paddy)	53	29	27	-8.5
Maize	31	21	18	-14.5
Others	24	19	10	-50.8
Total	185	122	93	-23.8

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Humanitarian assistance needed for most vulnerable people

Despite adequate availabilities of grains on markets, most households do not have enough access to food as prices of most staple foods are above average and households' purchasing power declined due to the drop in 2018 production of groundnuts, the major cash crop. In addition, some vulnerable households still depend on external food assistance to satisfy their food consumption. According to the March 2019 "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis, about 46 000 people were estimated to be in need of food assistance from March to May 2019, with a slight increase from the 45 000 people estimated in March to May 2018. This number is expected to increase to over 89 000 people during the lean season (June to August 2019) if no mitigation actions are taken.

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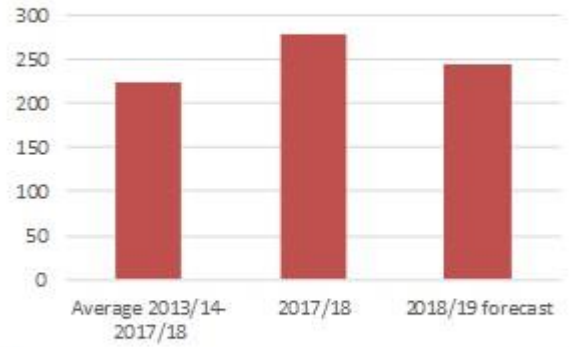
Gambia

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 19-March-2019

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Below-average cereal production gathered in 2018**
- **Moderate economic growth projected, food price inflation slightly increasing**
- **Continued assistance needed for vulnerable people**

Below-average harvest gathered in 2018

The 2018 agricultural season was characterized by late onsets of rains across all the regions, periodic dry spells and emergence of Fall Armyworm. This has resulted in delayed sowing of plants at critical periods of crop development and led to re-sowing, which caused some additional costs for farmers as they purchased seeds. The 2018 national cereal production was estimated at 89 000 tonnes, about 52 percent below the average of the previous five years and 27 percent below last year. The major declines were observed in rice and millet production.

Imports account for over half of the national cereal utilization in the country. Rice accounts for about 70 percent of the import requirements, followed by wheat, which accounts for about 20 percent. Import requirements for the 2018/19 (November/October) marketing year are forecast at 250 000 tonnes, slightly below 2017/18, but above the last five-year average.

Moderate economic growth projected, food price inflation slightly increasing

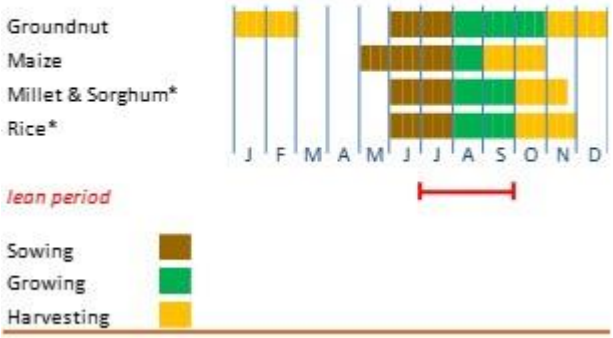
According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), the economy is expected to continue its recovery at a rate of 4.8 percent in 2019, although slightly below the 5.4 percent recorded in 2018. The economic growth will be supported by sustained increases in public investment, in relation to the robust inflows of foreign aid and the development of tourism. In 2019, the year-on-year food price inflation is forecast at 6.9 percent, slightly up from the 6.5 percent recorded in 2018 due to the impact of proposed rises to civil servants' salaries in the 2019 budget, the effect of faster exchange rate depreciation and a fall in international oil prices (fuel is the country's third largest import).

Humanitarian assistance needed for most vulnerable people

Due to the decline in crop production, farmers' own stocks are expected to run out earlier than usual. As a result, farmers would

Gambia

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

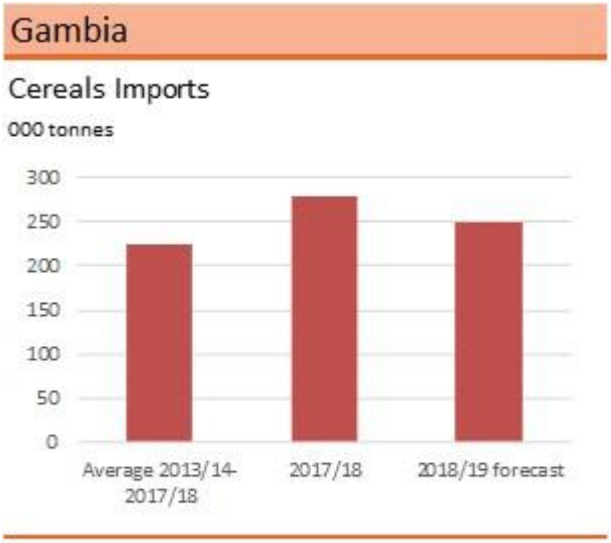
Gambia

Cereal Production

	2013-2017 average	2017	2018 estimate	change 2018/2017
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	77	52	37	-29.2
Rice (paddy)	53	30	25	-18.0
Maize	31	21	18	-15.4
Others	24	19	9	-55.4
Total	185	123	89	-27.4

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

resort to the markets for their food purchases in a context of increasing prices of basic food commodities. Some vulnerable households with limited access to food still need external food assistance. According to the November 2018 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 99 000 people are estimated to be in need of food assistance from October to December 2018, with a significant increase from 45 000 food insecure in March-May 2018. This number is expected to increase to 189 000 during the period June to August 2019, if no mitigation actions are taken.



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 24-July-2018

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Favourable moisture conditions allow timely planting of 2018 crops**
- **Cereal import requirements expected at same level of last year**
- **Strong economic growth projected, food price inflation decreasing**
- **Humanitarian assistance needed for vulnerable people**

Timely start of 2018 planting season

Rains started on time in late June and early July allowing for a normal start of the 2018 cropping season. Planting of maize, for harvesting from September, and rice, millet and sorghum for harvesting from October, is expected to be completed by end-July.

Land preparation and planting operations for groundnuts, the major cash crop produced in the country, are ongoing and the harvest will start in November.

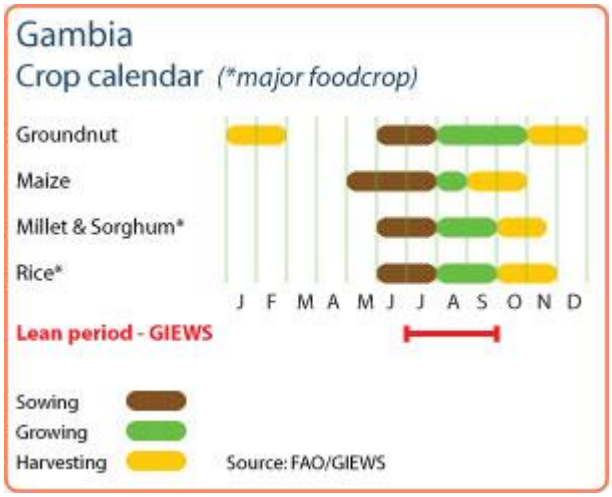
Cereal import requirements maintained to offset decrease in production

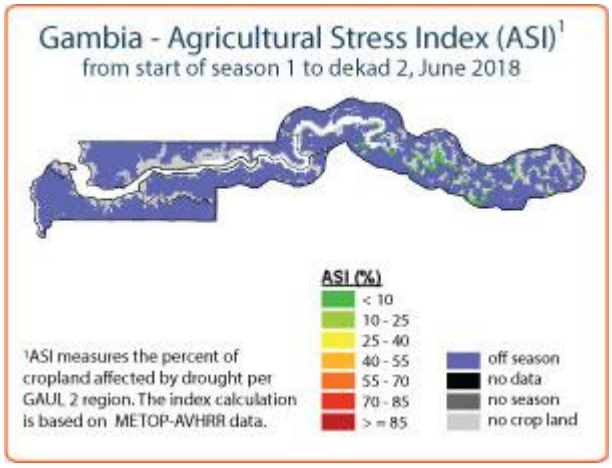
The 2017 agricultural season was characterized by near-average rainfall. However, crop development and harvest were adversely affected by heavy flooding in August 2017, followed by a dry spell in September. In addition, attacks by migratory birds have resulted in localized crop losses. The 2017 national cereal production was estimated at 126 000 tonnes, about 35 percent below the average of the previous five years. The major declines were observed in rice and millet production.

Imports account for over half of the national cereal utilization in the country. Rice accounts for about 70 percent of the import requirements, followed by wheat, which accounts for about 20 percent. As a consequence of the significant decline in 2017 domestic production, the import requirements for the 2017/18 marketing year (November/October) are expected to increase and remain almost one-fourth above the average.

Strong economic growth projected, food price inflation decreasing

According to the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS), the economic growth is expected to pick up during 2018 due to the





Gambia

Cereal production

	2013-2017 average	2017	2018 forecast	change 2018/2017
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	83	53	80	51
Rice (paddy)	53	30	57	90
Maize	32	23	33	43
Others	26	20	25	25
Total	194	126	195	55

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

inflow of remittances and re-exports, the increase in public investment in sector-specific projects and infrastructure, the development of tourism and the sustained growth in agriculture with the modernization process. The GDP growth is forecast at 5.4 percent in 2018, over 6 percent up from an estimated 5.1 percent in 2017. The food inflation is expected to decrease to an average of 6.5 percent in 2018 from 8 percent in 2017, driven by favourable weather conditions supporting agricultural output. However, access to food is likely to continue to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Humanitarian assistance needed for most vulnerable people

The poor performance of the 2017 agricultural season has increased the vulnerability of most households who depend on farming activities as the main source of food and income. In addition, the political and institutional stalemate following the elections in 2016 has affected all economic activities, including tourism that normally accounts for about 20 percent of the GDP. According to the March 2018 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 45 000 people are estimated to be in need of food assistance in March to May 2018 compared to 21 000 people in October-December 2017. This number is expected to increase to 63 000 people during the June to August period if mitigation measures are not taken.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 13-November-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Timely and abundant rainfall benefited overall crop production**
- **Depreciation of local currency contributes to high prices of imported food commodities**
- **Humanitarian assistance still needed**

Recovery in cereal production expected in 2017

Harvesting of the 2017 maize crop ended in October, while that of rice, millet and sorghum is expected to be completed by the end of November. Harvesting of groundnuts, the country's main source of export, is about to begin and will continue until the end of February. In the 2017 cropping season, timely and above-average rainfall throughout July and August across all regions in the country benefitted crop development.

The presence of Fall Armyworm has been reported in all regions. However, the situation is being closely monitored by national authorities and no significant impact on crop production has yet been observed. Given favourable weather conditions, the aggregate 2017 cereal production is estimated at 192 000 tonnes, slightly below the five-year average and 5 percent above the harvest in 2016 which was affected by the late onset and irregular distribution of rainfall.

Depreciation of local currency contributes to high prices of imported food commodities

The country relies on imports to meet over half of its cereal consumption requirements, with rice and wheat accounting for over 70 and 20 percent of the requirements, respectively. Domestic cereal prices are strongly linked to world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The depreciation of the Dalasi in recent years has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. According to the Consumer Price Index published by the Gambian Bureau of Statistics, food inflation has eased slightly since its all-time high of 10 percent year-on-year recorded in January 2017, but remains above 8 percent. Access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Gambia

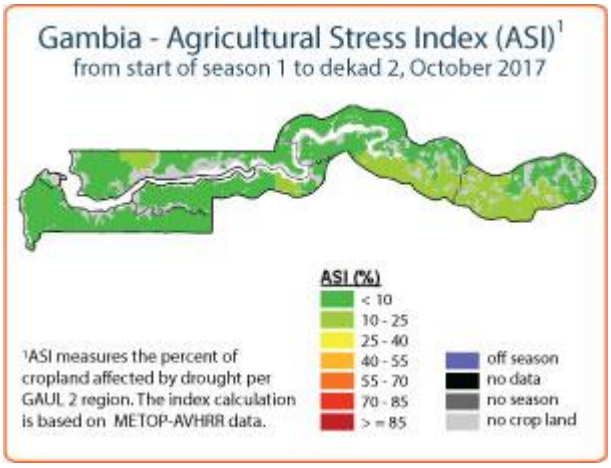
Cereal production

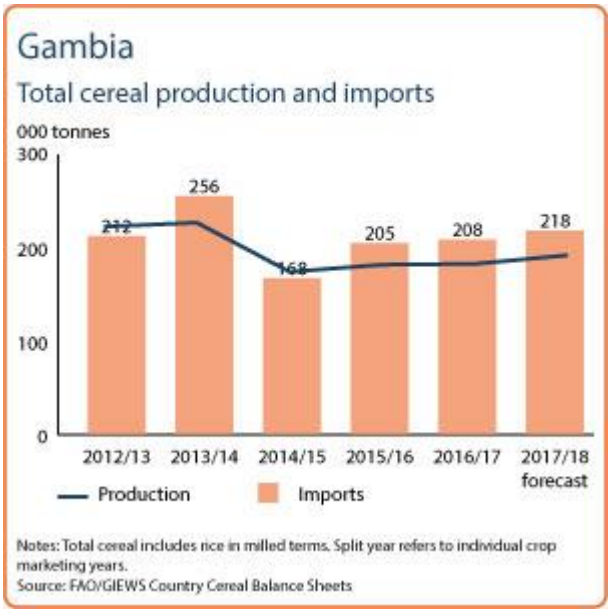
	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 estimate	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	86	72	76	6
Rice (paddy)	56	58	60	3
Maize	31	31	33	6
Others	24	21	23	10
Total	198	183	192	5

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Humanitarian assistance still needed for most vulnerable

Erratic weather adversely affected the 2016 cropping season, halving the groundnut cash crop harvest. Political uncertainty following the elections in 2016 also dampened tourism, which normally accounts for about 20 percent of the GDP. In addition, households' coping mechanisms have been eroded by a series of events such as the Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013, and insufficient rains in 2014, resulting in protracted food insecurity in several areas of the country and persistent acute malnutrition. The results of the "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis conducted in spring 2017 estimated that about 112 000 people were in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above, between June and August 2017, up from about 60 700 in the previous year.





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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 11-May-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Erratic rains affected 2016 crop production**
- **Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed**

Erratic rainfall resulted in below-average 2016 cereal harvest

Currently, seasonably dry conditions prevail in most parts of the country. Land preparation is underway and planting of the 2017 cereal crops is expected to start in the weeks ahead with the onset of the rains.

Harvesting of the 2016 crops was completed in November. The late onset and irregular distribution of the rains affected crop yields and pastures in several parts of the country. The 2016 aggregate cereal production was estimated at about 173 000 tonnes, 5 percent below the 2015 harvest and about 14 percent below the five-year average. Production of groundnuts, the main cash crop, is estimated to have declined by about 23 percent compared to the average.

Access to food constrained by high prices of imported food commodities

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013 and insufficient rains in 2014 and 2016 have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

About 78 000 people are estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above between March and May 2017, according to the latest "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is

Gambia

Cereal production

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 estimate	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	91	74	72	-3
Rice (paddy)	55	53	49	-8
Maize	31	32	31	-3
Others	23	23	21	-9
Total	200	182	173	-5

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

also a cause of concern. Chronic malnutrition ranges between 11 and 20 percent with the North Bank Region and the Lower River Region. The nutrition situation is expected to improve in 2017 thanks to numerous nutrition and health interventions across the country.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Gambia

Reference Date: 14-November-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Favourable prospects for 2016 cereal harvests**
- **Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed**

Cereal crops benefitted from favourable growing conditions

Harvesting of the 2016 cereal crops is underway across the country. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been adequate in most parts of the country and overall, crop prospects are favourable.

An above-average crop was already gathered in 2015, following the 2014 drought-reduced output. Aggregate cereal production in 2015 was estimated at about 239 000 tonnes, 37 percent higher than the 2014 harvest and 9 percent above the five-year average. Production of groundnuts, the main cash crop, is estimated to have increased by about 13 percent compared to the previous year's crop.

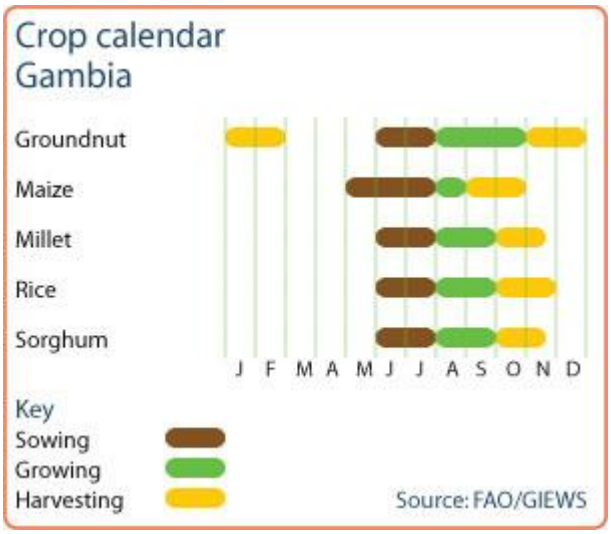
Access to food constrained by high prices of imported food commodities

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013, and drought in 2014, have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

About 96 280 people were estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above between June and August, according to the last "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is



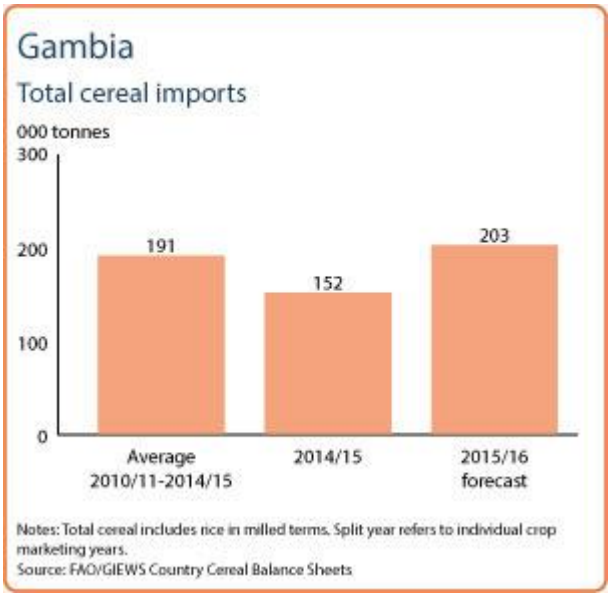
Gambia

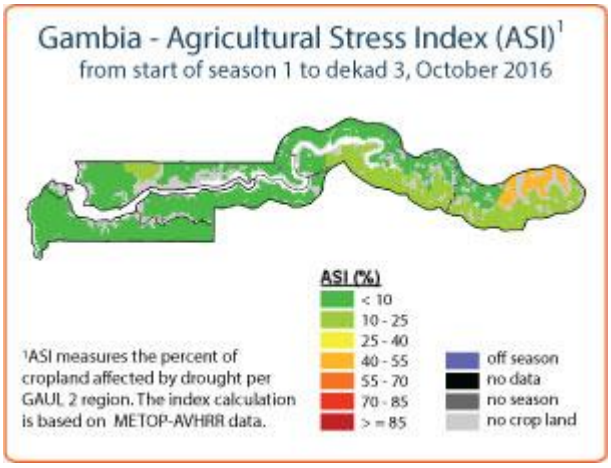
Cereal production

	2010-2014 average	2015	2016 forecast	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	105	104	114	10
Rice (paddy)	57	57	58	2
Maize	33	39	39	0
Others	25	27	26	-4
Total	219	227	237	4

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

also a cause of concern. Chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with the North Bank Region and the Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.





Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Gambia

Reference Date: 16-August-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- **Early crop prospects favourable**
- **Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed**

Growing conditions remain mostly favourable

Prospects for the 2016 cereal crops, to be harvested from September, are favourable in most regions following regular and widespread precipitation since the beginning of the season in July/August. Millet, sorghum and upland rice crops are developing satisfactorily, while transplanting of swamp rice is underway.

The 2015 aggregate cereal production was estimated at about 239 000 tonnes, 37 percent higher than the 2014 harvest and 9 percent above the five-year average. Production of groundnuts, the main cash crop, is estimated to have increased by about 13 percent compared to the previous year's crop.

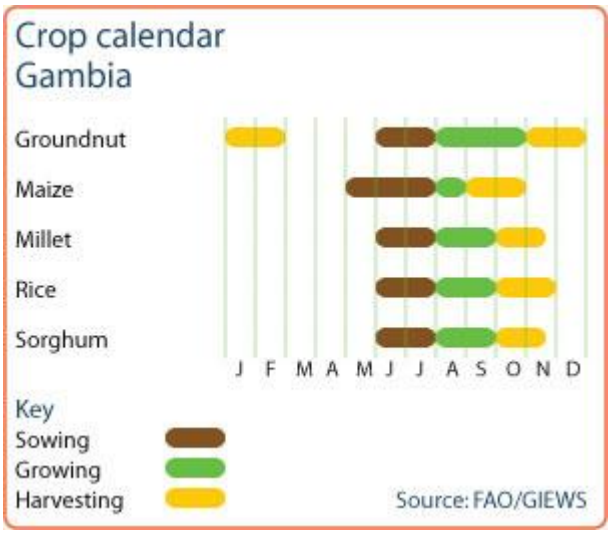
In 2014, growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures were poor in several parts of the country, mostly in central and western regions, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June, which delayed plantings, and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August. As a result, aggregate 2014 cereal production was estimated to have declined by about 21 percent to 174 000 tonnes compared to the average.

Access to food constrained by high prices of imported food commodities

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013, and drought in 2014, have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in



Gambia

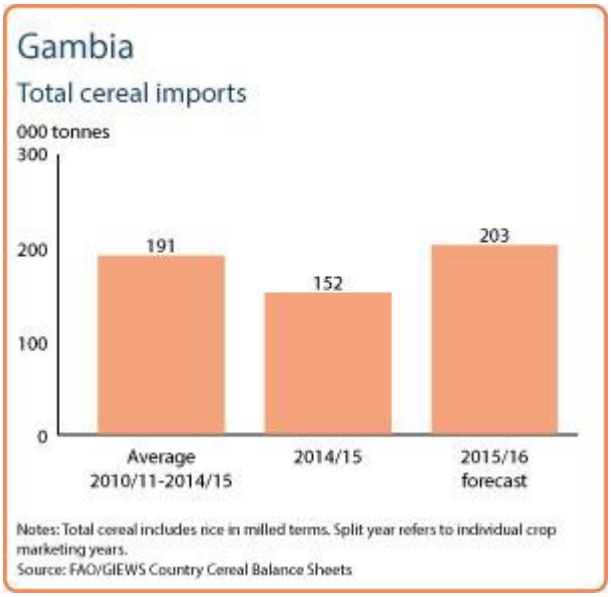
Cereal production

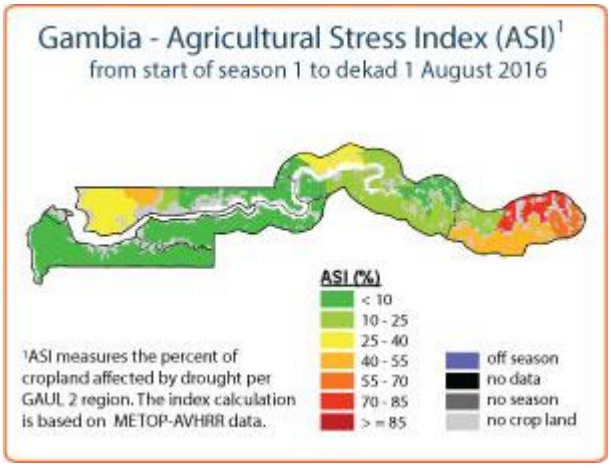
	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 estimate	change 2015/2014
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	105	77	104	35
Rice (paddy)	57	47	69	47
Maize	33	30	39	30
Others	25	20	27	35
Total	219	174	239	37

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

About 60 726 people were estimated to be in Phase 3: “Crisis” and above, according to the last “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern. Chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with the North Bank Region and the Central River Region surpassing the ’critical’ threshold of 30 percent.





Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
Islamic Republic of the Gambia

Reference Date: 10-March-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Preliminary estimates for 2015 harvest point to significant recovery in cereal production after previous year's steep drop**
- **Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed**

Cereal production recovered from previous year's low level

Harvesting of the 2015 cereal crops was completed in November. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures were adequate in most parts of the country. The 2015 aggregate cereal production is estimated at about 197 000 tonnes, 13 percent higher than the 2014 harvest but still 10 percent below the five-year average. Production of groundnuts, the main cash crop, is estimated to have increased by about 13 percent compared to the previous year's crop.

In 2014, growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures were poor in several parts of the country, mostly in central and western regions, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June, which delayed plantings, and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August. As a result, aggregate 2014 cereal production was estimated to have declined by about 21 percent to 174 000 tonnes compared to the average.

Gambia

Cereal production

	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 forecast	change 2015/2014
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	105	77	90	17
Rice (paddy)	57	47	57	21
Maize	33	30	25	-17
Others	25	20	25	25
Total	219	174	197	13

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Access to food constrained by high prices of imported food commodities

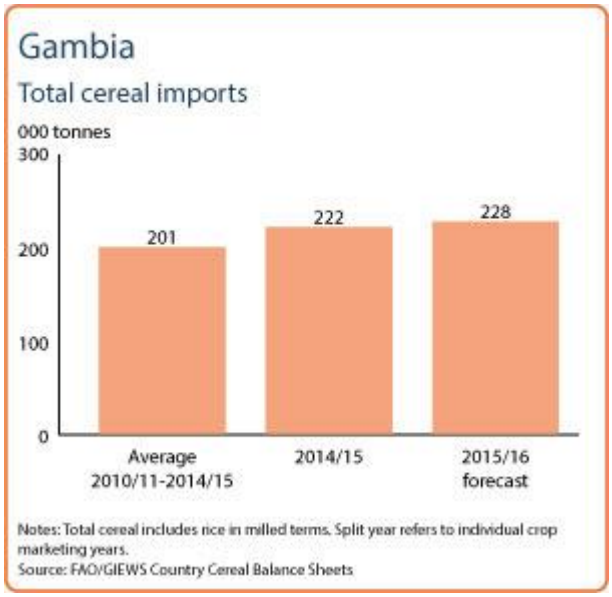
The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013, and drought in 2014, have eroded

vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

About 60 726 people were estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above, according to the last "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern. Chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with North Bank Region and Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.



GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 06-November-2015

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Preliminary forecast for 2015 harvest points to significant recovery in cereal production after last year's steep drop**
- **Access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices**
- **Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed**

Cereal production is expected to recover from last year's low level

Harvesting of the 2015 cereal crops is underway across the country. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been adequate in most parts of the country and, overall, crop prospects are mostly favourable.

According to a preliminary forecast released by the national agricultural statistics office, aggregate cereal production in 2015 will increase by 13 percent (compared to 2014) to about 197 000 tonnes. However, this level of production would be 10 percent below the five-year average. Production of groundnuts, the main cash crop, is anticipated to increase by about 12 percent compared to last year's harvest.

In 2014, growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been poor in several parts of the country, mostly in central and western regions, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June, which delayed plantings and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August. As a result, aggregate 2014 cereal production was estimated to have declined by about 20 percent to 174 000 tonnes compared to the average.

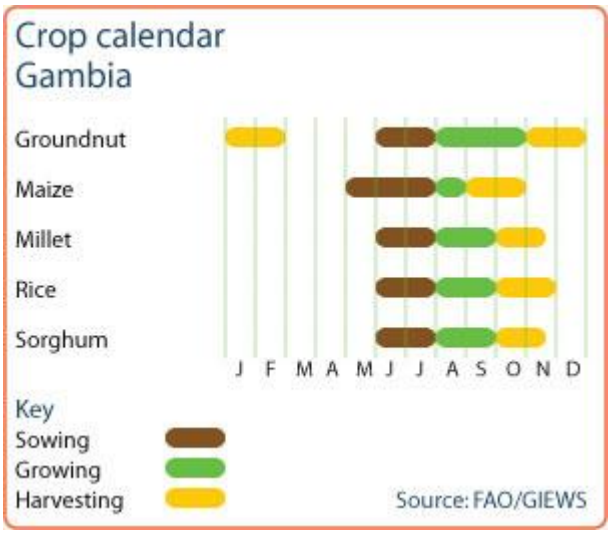
Access to food constrained by high food prices

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013, and drought in 2014 have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

About 178 000 people were estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above, between June and August 2015 according to the last "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern. Chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with North Bank Region and Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 forecast	change 2015/2014
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	105	77	90	17
Rice (paddy)	57	47	57	21
Maize	33	30	25	-17
Others	25	20	25	25
Total	219	174	197	13

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 5-November-2014

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Preliminary forecast for the 2014 harvest points to a large decline in cereal production
- Access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices
- Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed

2014 cereal production forecast to decline sharply due to rainfall deficits

Harvesting of the 2014 cereal crops is underway across the country. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been poor in several parts of the country, mostly in central and western regions, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June which delayed plantings, and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August.

According to a preliminary forecast released by national agricultural statistics, aggregate cereal production in 2014 will drop by 75 percent (compared to 2013) to about 57 000 tonnes. Production of groundnut, the main cash crop, is anticipated to decline by over 80 percent. Moreover, the erratic rains caused the depletion of grazing resources and lowered water points' level in the major pastoral areas of the country.

In 2013, favourable climatic conditions in the main cereal growing regions benefited crops during the growing period: as a result, aggregate 2013 cereal production was estimated to have increased by about 5 percent to 227 000 tonnes compared to 2012.

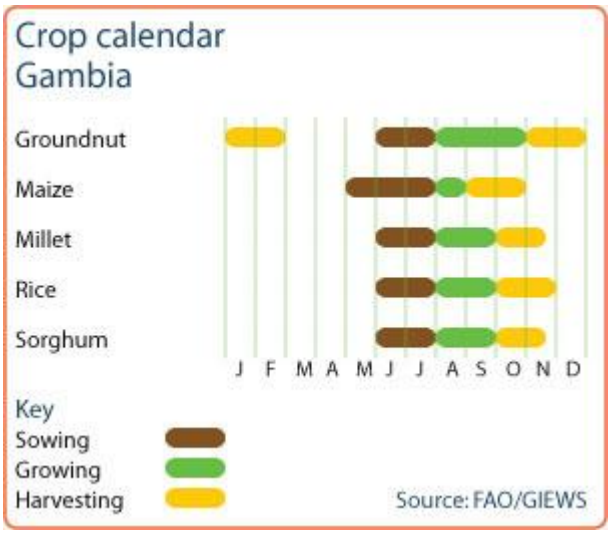
Access to food constrained by high food prices

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. As a result, access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of recent Sahel food crises, localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013 and drought in 2014 have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

Despite adequate cereal production in 2012 and 2013, about 202 500 people are estimated to be in Phase 3 (Crisis) and above according to the last Cadre Harmonisé analysis conducted in the country. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern: chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with North Bank Region and Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2009-2013 average	2013	2014 forecast	change 2014/2013
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	118	94	25	-73
Maize	38	33	8	-76
Rice (paddy)	38	70	15	-79
Others	27	30	9	-70
Total	221	227	57	-75

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

The United Nations and humanitarian partners launched earlier this year a three-year Regional Strategic Response Plan (RSRP) to provide aid to millions of people in nine countries of the Sahel belt. The country plan for the Gambia is seeking to mobilize USD 26 million to provide food and non-food assitance to over 345 000 people accross the country.

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 10-February-2014

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Good 2013 cereal harvest estimated
- Access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices
- Humanitarian assistance continues to be needed

Good 2013 cereal harvests

Harvesting of the 2013 cereal crops was completed in November. Favourable climatic conditions in the main cereal growing regions benefited crops during the growing period: as a result, aggregate 2013 cereal production has been estimated to have increased by about 5 percent to 229 000 tonnes compared to 2012.

Access to food constrained by high food prices

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

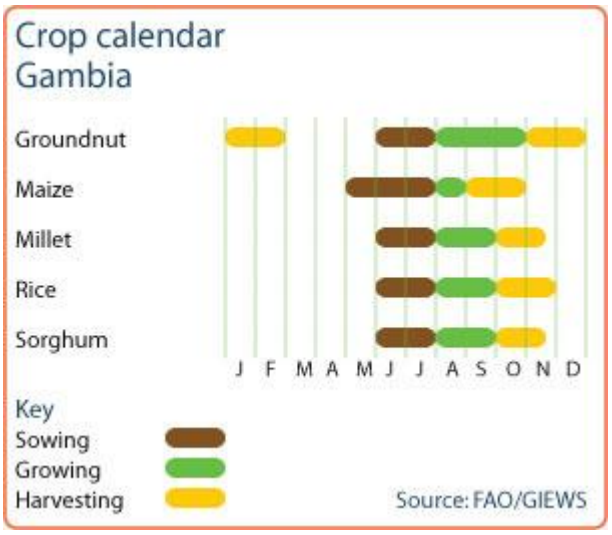
A satisfactory food supply situation is expected during the 2013/14 marketing year (November/October), following the improved domestic harvest position and the favourable trends in international food exports markets. However domestic prices of imported cereals have remained relatively high, reflecting the continued depreciation of the Dalasi. Access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the 2012 Sahel Crisis and localized heavy flooding in 2012 and 2013 have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

Despite a recovery in cereal production in 2012 and 2013, access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of the Sahel food crisis. About 285 000 people are estimated to be at risk of food insecurity. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern: chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with North Bank Region and Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.

The United Nations and humanitarian partners recently launched a three-year Regional Strategic Response Plan (RSRP) to provide aid to millions of people in nine countries of the Sahel belt. The country plan for the Gambia is seeking to mobilise USD 26 million to provide food and non-food assitance to over 345 000 people accross the country.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 forecast	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	126	112	119	6
Maize	40	29	30	3
Rice (paddy)	32	50	56	12
Others	26	27	24	-11
Total	225	218	229	5

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 28-November-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Good 2013 cereal harvest estimated
- Access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of 2011/12 food crisis

Good 2013 cereal harvests

Harvesting of the 2013 cereal crops was completed in November. Favourable climatic conditions in the main cereal growing regions benefited crops during the growing period: as a result, aggregate 2013 cereal production has been estimated to have increased by about 5 percent to 229 000 tonnes compared to 2012.

Access to food constrained by high food prices

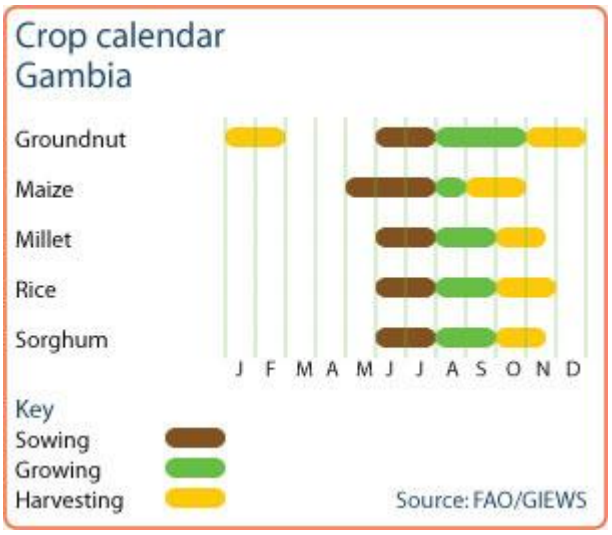
The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

The improved domestic harvest position, the adequate supply in most neighbouring countries and the favourable trends in international food exports markets, have led to much improved food availability during the 2012/13 marketing year (November/October). However domestic prices of imported cereals have remained relatively high, reflecting the continued depreciation of the Dalasi. Access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

The combined effects of the 2011 Sahel Crisis and heavy flooding in July/October 2012 have eroded vulnerable households' coping mechanisms and resulted in protracted food insecurity in pockets of the country and persisting acute malnutrition.

Despite a recovery in cereal production in 2012 and 2013, access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of the Sahel food crisis. Two thirds of households face food insecurity, of which 5.5 percent suffer from 'moderate' or 'severe' food insecurity. Child malnutrition is also a cause of concern: chronic malnutrition ranges between 13.9 and 30.7 percent with North Bank Region and Central River Region surpassing the 'critical' threshold of 30 percent.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 forecast	change 2013/2012
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Millet	126	112	119	6
Maize	40	29	30	3
Rice (paddy)	32	50	56	12
Others	26	27	24	-11
Total	225	218	229	5

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 09-September-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Above-average harvest anticipated in 2013
- The food supply situation has improved in 2012/13 (November/October) compared to the previous year
- However, access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of 2011/12 food crisis

Good harvests are expected in 2013

Prospects for the 2013 cereal crops, about to be harvested, is favourable following regular and widespread precipitation since the beginning of the growing season in July/August. Millet, sorghum and upland rice crops are developing satisfactorily, while transplanting of swamp rice is underway. Groundnut crops are flowering/pegging countrywide.

In 2012, an above-average harvest was gathered owing to favourable climatic conditions in the main cereal growing regions. According to the final estimates, the 2012 cereal output was estimated at about 218 000 tonnes, 36 percent higher than the 2011 drought-affected output and 4 percent above the average of the past five years.

In 2011, dry spells and poor rainfall distribution during the growing period (July to October) resulted in a 35 percent decline in cereal production compared to the previous year.

Access to food constrained by high food prices

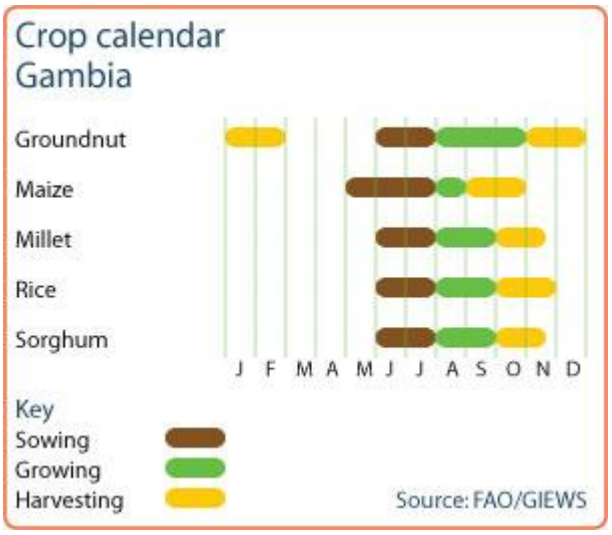
The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

The improved domestic harvest position, the adequate supply in most neighbouring countries and the favourable trends in international food exports markets, have led to much improved food availability during the 2012/13 marketing year (November/October). However domestic prices of imported cereals have remained relatively high, reflecting the continued depreciation of the Dalasi. Access to food continues to be difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

Despite the improved overall food situation, a significant portion of the population continues to be food insecure this year mostly as a result of reduced access to food due to high food prices and the lingering effects of 2011/12 food crisis.

Last year, the number of people affected by food insecurity was estimated at about 700 000 people following a poor 2011 cereal production.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2007-2011 average	2011	2012 estimate	change 2012/2011
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	121	99	112	13
Maize	41	30	29	-3
Rice (paddy)	24	18	50	178
Others	24	13	27	108
Total	211	160	218	36

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 10-June-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Above-average precipitation expected in 2013
- Estimates for the 2012 harvest point to a large recovery in cereal production
- The food supply situation has improved in 2012/13 compared to the previous year
- Howewver, access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of last year food crisis

Seasonably dry conditions prevail in most parts of the country

Seasonably dry conditions continue to prevail in most parts of the country. Rains are expected to start and cover the whole country in June and July. According to the first 2013 weather forecast carried out by Agrhymet Centre and ACMAD, the western part of West Africa including the Gambia is likely to receive above-average rainfall between July and September this year.

An above-average cereal harvest estimated in 2012 following improved weather

Harvesting of the 2012 rainfed cereal crops was completed last November. Despite flooding in parts, adequate rainfall during the main cropping season has resulted in a substantial recovery in cereal production. According to the final estimates, the 2012 cereal output was estimated at about 219 000 tonnes, 36 percent higher than the 2011 drought-affected output and 4 percent above the average of the past five years.

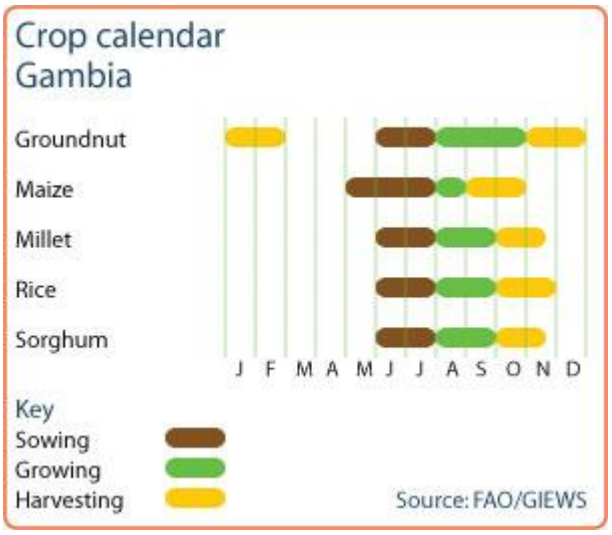
In 2011, dry spells and poor rainfall distribution during the growing period (July to October) resulted in a 35 percent decline in cereal production compared to the previous year.

Access to food constrained by high food prices

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

The improved domestic harvest position, coupled with adequate supply in most neighbouring countries and favourable trends in international food exports markets, is expected to lead to much improved food availability during the 2012/13 marketing year (November/October). However domestic prices of imported cereals are likely to stay high, in view of the continuing depreciation of the Dalasi. Access to food will remain difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for



Gambia

Cereal production

	2007-2011 average	2011	2012 estimate	change 2012/2011
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	121	99	112	13
Maize	41	30	29	-3
Rice (paddy)	24	18	50	178
Others	24	13	27	108
Total	211	160	218	36

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

vulnerable people

A significant portion of the population will continue to be food insecure this year mostly as a result of reduced access to food due to high food prices and the lingering effects of last year's food crisis.

Last year, about 700 000 people have been affected by food insecurity, following a poor 2011 cereal production.

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 22-April-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Estimates for the 2012 harvest point to a large recovery in cereal production
- The food supply situation has improved in 2012/13 compared to the previous year
- Howewver, access to food continues to be constrained by high food prices and the lingering effects of last year food crisis

Seasonably dry conditions prevail across the country and the 2013 cropping season is expected to start in June.

An above-average cereal harvest estimated following improved weather

Harvesting of the 2012 rainfed cereal crops was completed last November. Despite flooding in parts, adequate rainfall during the main cropping season has resulted in a substantial recovery in cereal production. According to the final estimates, the 2012 cereal output was estimated at about 219 000 tonnes, 36 percent higher than the 2011 drought-affected output and 4 percent above the average of the past five years.

In 2011, dry spells and poor rainfall distribution during the growing period (July to October) resulted in a 35 percent decline in cereal production compared to the previous year.

Access to food constrained by high food prices

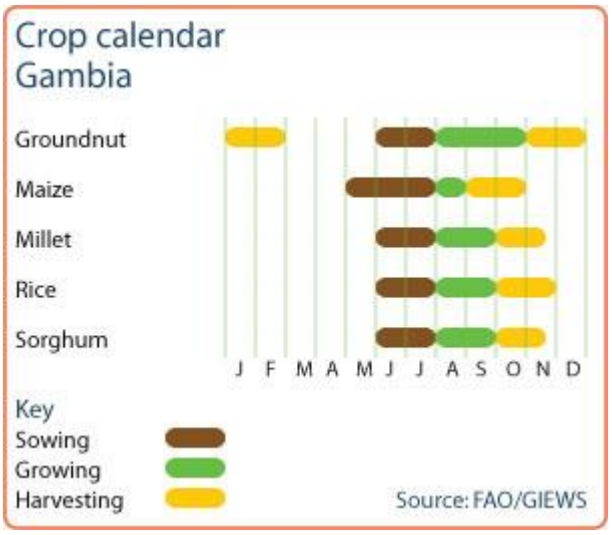
The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few years, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

The improved domestic harvest position, coupled with adequate supply in most neighbouring countries and favourable trends in international food exports markets, is expected to lead to much improved food availability during the 2012/13 marketing year (November/October). However domestic prices of imported cereals are likely to stay high, in view of the continuing depreciation of the Dalasi. Access to food will remain difficult for several segments of the population.

Continued assistance is still needed, especially for vulnerable people

A significant portion of the population will continue to be food insecure this year mostly as a result of reduced access to food due to high food prices and the lingering effects of last year's food crisis.

Last year, about 700 000 people have been affected by food insecurity, following a poor 2011 cereal production.



Gambia

Cereal production

	2007-2011 average	2011	2012 estimate	change 2012/2011
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	121	99	112	13
Maize	41	30	29	-3
Rice (paddy)	24	18	50	178
Others	24	13	27	108
Total	211	160	218	36

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 23-March-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Estimates for the 2011 harvest point to a large decline in cereal production
- Cereal prices at near record to record levels
- More than 700 000 people are food insecure; urgent action needed to prevent further deterioration of the food situation

2011 cereal production sharply reduced due to rainfall deficits

Harvesting of the 2011 cereal crops was completed in November. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been poor in several parts of the country, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June which delayed plantings, and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August together with an early cessation of rainfall in September.

As a result, aggregate cereal production in 2011 is estimated at some 159 000 tonnes, 56 percent less than the previous year's record harvest and 38 percent below the average for the previous five years.

Cereal prices at near record to record levels

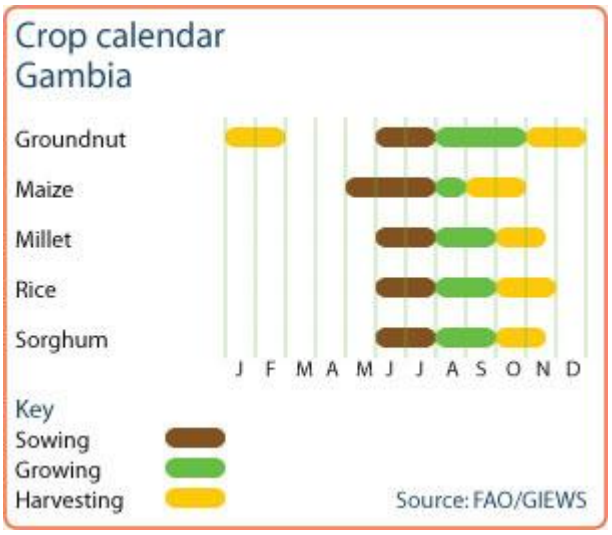
The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few months, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

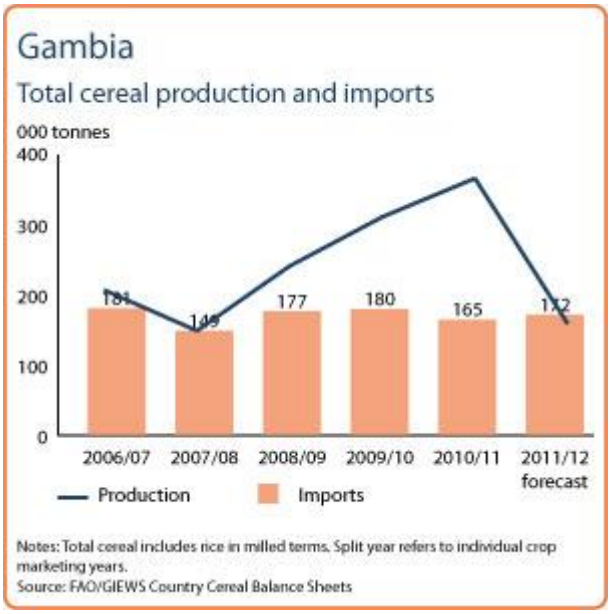
Prices of both local and imported rice in December 2011 exceeded the record levels reached during the 2008 food price crisis by 3.6 and 2.1 percent, respectively. Prices of millet, the main coarse grain grown in the country, have also increased significantly, and in December 2011 they were about 18 percent above the 2008 peak levels.

Cereal prices are likely to stay high during marketing year 2011/12 (November-October), given high international prices and low supply levels in the whole western Sahel region.

Food and agricultural assistance needed

An early start of the lean season and high cereal prices, caused by the poor 2011 cereal production, have led to severe food insecurity in several parts of the country. About 700 000 people are estimated to be affected by food insecurity, including 500 000 in rural areas and about 200 000 in urban areas. On 6 March 2012, the Government of The Gambia declared a national emergency and called for international assistance to address the consequences of the crop failure appealing for USD 23 million in seeds, fertilisers and food aid.





GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 10-January-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Estimates for the 2011 harvest point to a large decline in cereal production
- The depreciation of the national currency the Dalasi, high international food prices and limited coarse grains supply will make access to food difficult in marketing year 2011/12.

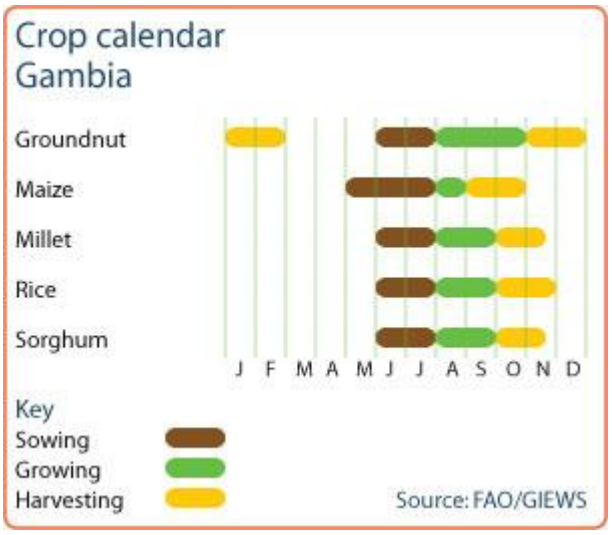
2011 cereal production sharply reduced due to rainfall deficits

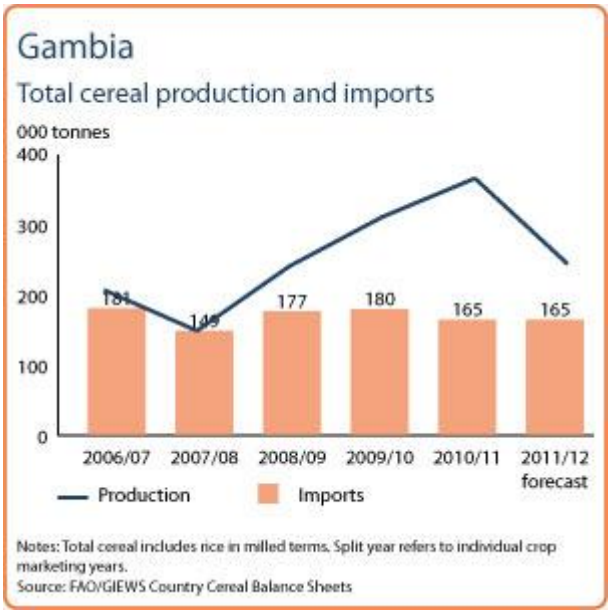
Harvesting of the 2011 cereal crops was completed in November. Growing conditions for cereal crops and pastures have been poor in several parts of the country, due to irregular rains at the beginning of the cropping season in May/June which delayed plantings, and subsequent erratic precipitation in July and August; and an early cessation of rainfall in September.

A joint FAO/CILSS/WFP Crop Assessment Mission which visited the country in October, estimated the 2011 aggregate cereal production at some 244 000 tonnes, 33 percent less than last year's record harvest and 4 percent below the average for the previous five years. Compared to last year, production of millet, the main coarse grain grown in the country, is estimated to decrease by 8 percent to 145 000 tonnes, while paddy production is expected to drop by 74 percent.

Cereal prices on the increase

The Gambia, in a normal year, relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The Dalasi has depreciated significantly over the past few months, which combined with high international commodity prices, has put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities. Moreover coarse grains prices are likely to stay high during marketing year 2011/12 (November-October), given that production has decreased and supply will be limited in the whole western Sahel region. High food prices will make access to food difficult for large segment of the population.





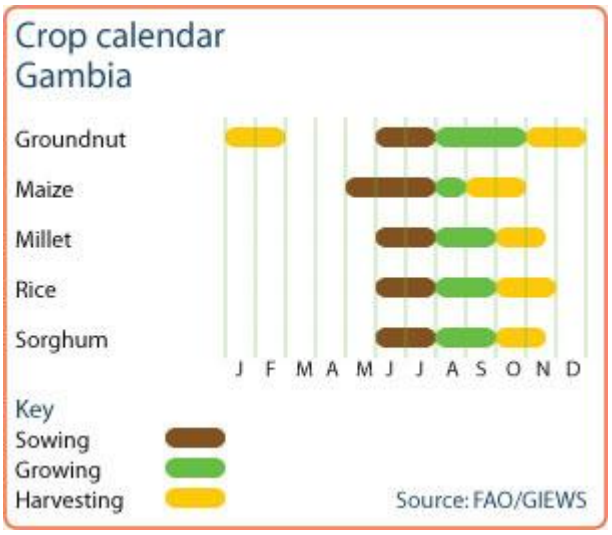
GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 23-May-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- The 2011 cropping season is expected to start with the onset of rains, normally in June
- In 2010, national cereal production increased for a third consecutive year reflecting adequate weather conditions and continued government support to the agricultural sector
- However, the depreciation of the Dalasi and high international food prices will continue to affect access to food mainly due to the country's high import dependency



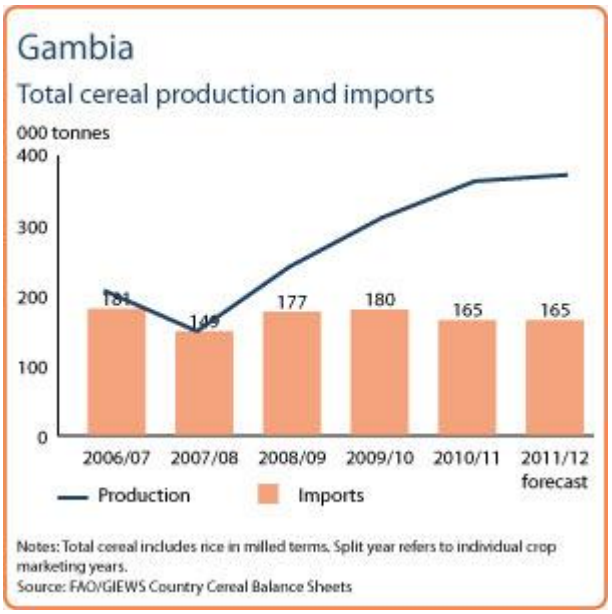
Seasonably dry conditions prevail

The rains have not yet started and farmers are currently preparing their fields. Planting of the 2011 cereal crops is scheduled to start in June with the onset of the rains.

Favourable weather conditions benefited crops in 2010

Favourable weather conditions and continued government support towards the agriculture sector contributed to the increase in national cereal production for a third consecutive year.

Aggregate 2010 cereal production has been estimated at a record 362 906 tonnes, an increase of 17 percent over the previous year's good crop and about 63 percent above the average of the previous five years. Groundnut production, the main source of cash income for rural households, increased by nearly 13 percent to 137 631 tonnes.



Domestic prices of imported food commodities are likely to increase

Prices of staple food remained mostly stable in 2010 and the first quarter of 2011 following the previous years' good harvest. However, the country still relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The dalasi is forecast to continue to depreciate in 2011, which combined with increasing international commodity prices, is likely to put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

Reflecting last year's good crop, cereal imports in marketing year 2010/11 (November/October) are forecasted at about 165 000 tonnes, 8 percent down on 2009/10.

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 07-February-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- National cereal production increased for a third consecutive year reflecting adequate weather conditions and continued government support to the agricultural sector.
- However, the depreciation of the Dalasi and high international food prices will continue to affect access to food due to the country's high import dependency.

Favourable weather conditions benefited crops in 2010

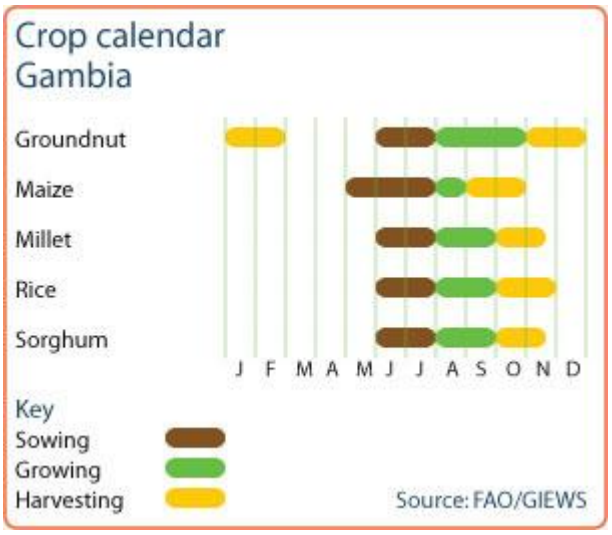
Harvesting of millet and rice, the major grains produced in the country, was completed in November. Favourable weather conditions and continued government support towards the agriculture sector contributed to the increase in national cereal production for a third consecutive year.

Aggregate 2010 cereal production has been estimated at a record 365 328 tonnes, an increase of 18 percent over the previous year's good crop and about 64 percent above the average of the previous five years. Groundnut production, the main source of cash income for rural households, increased by nearly 11 percent to 135 000 tonnes.

Domestic prices of imported food commodities are likely to increase

Prices of staple food remained mostly stable in 2010 following previous year's good harvest. However, the country still relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The dalasi is forecast to continue to depreciate in 2011, which combined with increasing international commodity prices, is likely to put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

Reflecting last year's good crop, cereal imports in marketing year 2010/11 (November/October) are forecasted at about 127 000 tonnes, 10 percent down on 2009/10.

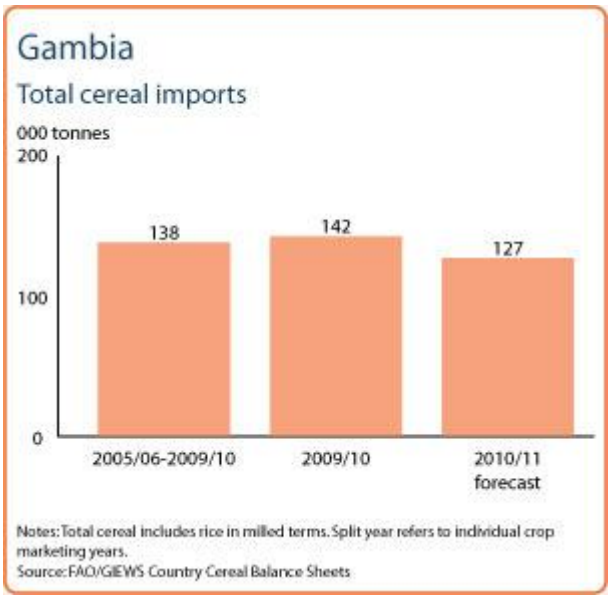


Gambia

Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 estimate	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	124	145	160	10
Maize	38	55	66	20
Rice (paddy)	34	79	102	29
Others	28	32	37	16
Total	223	310	365	18

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 16-April-2010

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- 2009 cereal production was 51 percent higher than the average of the previous five years, due mainly to favourable weather conditions.
- However, the depreciation of the Dalasi will continue to affect access to food due to the country's high import dependency.

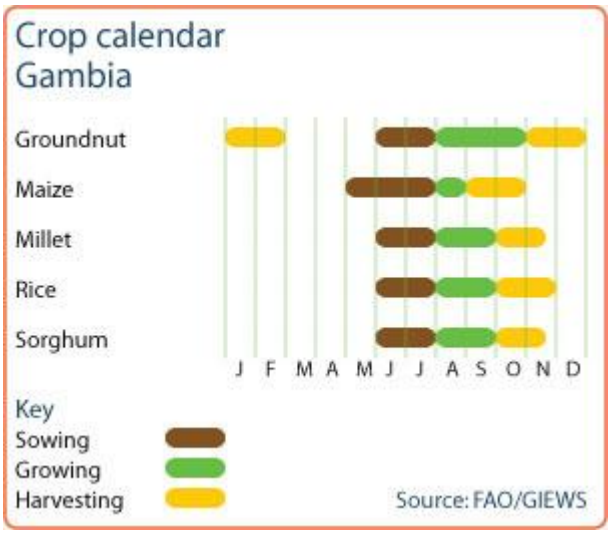
Improved food security situation expected in 2010 following a good cereal and groundnut production.

Seasonably dry conditions prevail. Planting of the 2010 cereal crops is scheduled to start in June with the onset of the rains. Aggregate 2009 cereal production has been estimated at a record 310 375 tonnes, an increase of 29 percent over the previous year's good crop and about 51 percent above the average of the previous five years, due mainly to good rains. Groundnut production, the main source of cash income for rural households, increased by nearly 6 percent to 115 766 tonnes. An improved food security situation is, therefore, expected in 2010.

Domestic prices of imported food commodities are likely to remain high due to the depreciation of the national currency

Prices of staple food have declined significantly countrywide following last year's good harvest. However, the country still relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The dalasi is forecast to continue to depreciate in 2010 which is likely to put an upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities.

Reflecting last year's good crop, cereal imports in marketing year 2009/10 (November/October) are forecasted at about 122 000 tonnes, 15 percent down on 2008/09.

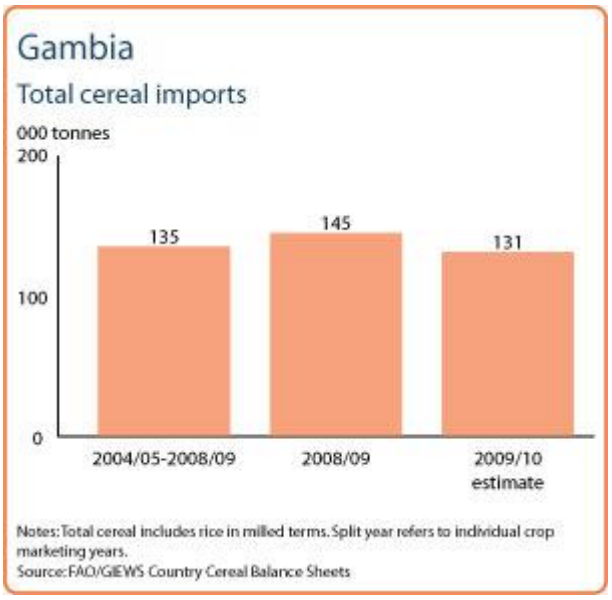


Gambia

Cereal production

	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 estimate	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	121	132	145	10
Maize	32	45	55	22
Sorghum	27	26	32	23
Others	25	38	79	108
Total	205	240	310	29

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 29-January-2010

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

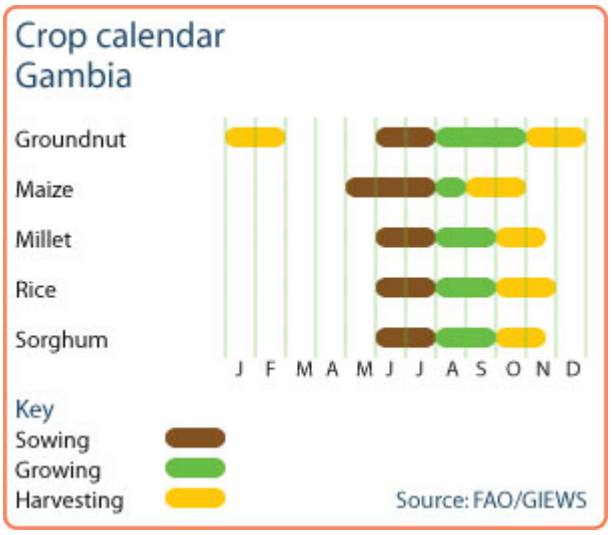
- 2009 cereal production was 40 percent higher than the average of the previous five years, due mainly to favorable weather conditions.
- However, the depreciation of the Dalasi will continue to affect access to food due to the high import dependence of the country.

An improved food security situation is expected in 2010 following a good cereal and groundnut production.

Aggregate 2009 cereal production has been estimated at a record 284 728 tonnes, an increase of 18 percent over the previous year's good crop and about 40 percent above the average of the previous five years, due mainly to good rains. Groundnut production, the main source of cash income for rural households, increased by nearly 6 percent to 115 766 tonnes. An improved food security situation is, therefore, expected in 2010.

Domestic prices of imported food commodities are likely to remain high due to the depreciation of the national currency

However, the country relies on imports for nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. The dalasi is forecast to continue to depreciate in 2010 which is likely to put upward pressure on domestic prices of imported food commodities



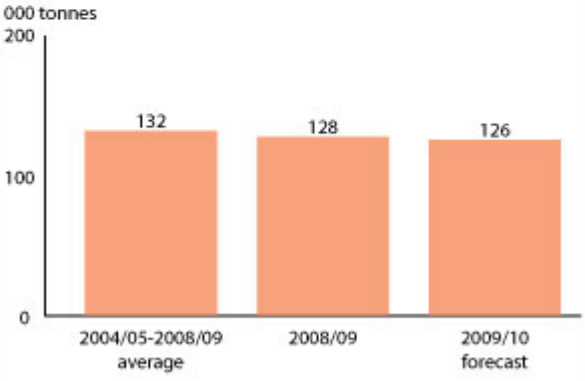
Gambia

Cereal production

	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 forecast	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	121	132	142	8
Maize	32	45	52	16
Sorghum	27	26	30	15
Others	25	38	61	61
Total	205	240	285	19

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Total cereal imports



Notes: Total cereal includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Gambia

Reference Date: 24-September-2009

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

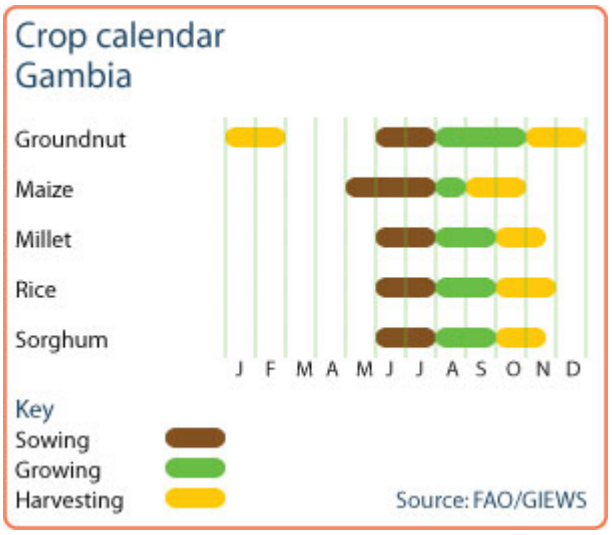
- Overall favorable harvest prospects for current crops.
- Inflation remains high although it has been declining since March.

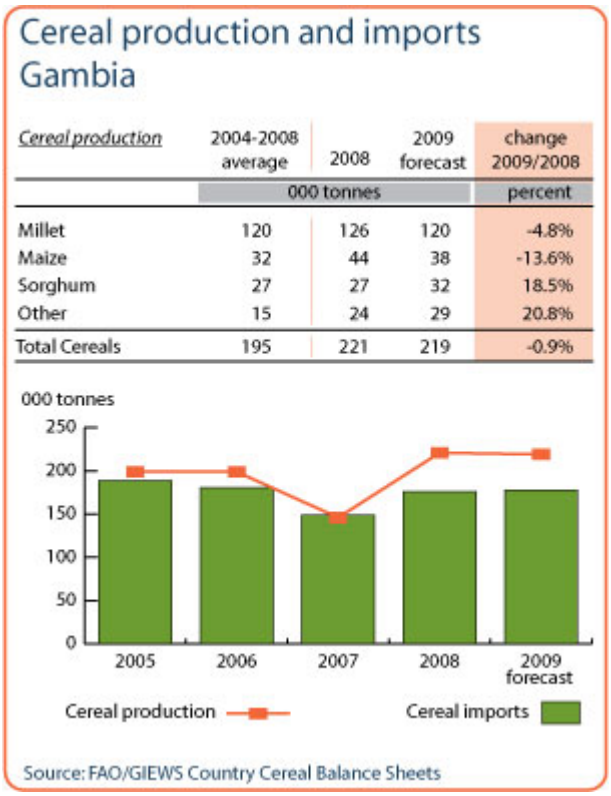
Favourable harvest prospects for rice and coarse grain crops.

The cropping season has been slow to start but precipitation improved from July and remained adequate in August with reports of floods in several regions. Reflecting this improvement, millet, sorghum and upland rice crops are developing satisfactorily, while transplanting of swamp rice is underway. Groundnut crops are flowering/pegging countrywide. Harvesting of maize is expected to start soon, which will improve food supply and lower food prices.

Inflation is declining but still relatively high due to the depreciation of the national currency

Good rains and high food prices last year have benefited agricultural production. A record cereal harvest was gathered and production of groundnut, the main source of cash income for rural households, was also estimated to have increased significantly. However, the country imports nearly half of its cereal consumption requirements (mostly rice and wheat) in a normal year and domestic cereal prices are strongly affected by world prices and the exchange rate of the Dalasi (GMD), the national currency. While coarse grain prices have declined significantly reflecting the abundant crop in The Gambia as well as in neighbouring Senegal, domestic prices of rice remain relatively high following the steep depreciation of the Dalassi due to the impact of the global economic crisis. As a result, in spite of the downward trend observed since March 2009, the year-on-year rate of inflation was estimated at 5.4 percent in June up from just 1.4 percent in April 2008, considerably eroding the purchasing power of urban and rural consumers.





Cereal production	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 forecast	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	120	126	120	-4.8%
Maize	32	44	38	-13.6%
Sorghum	27	27	32	18.5%
Other	15	24	29	20.8%
Total Cereals	195	221	219	-0.9%