

Second Watching Brief

HIGHLIGHTS

- Warning of renewed droughts threatening basic livelihoods in large areas of the central plain and eastern savannas
- Census planning creates problems around ethnicity question and major protests erupt.
- National Development Plan Adopted by national council
- NGOs and local governments warn of major risk of waterborne disease around Qah'zeem and refugee camps

SITUATION UPDATE

Humanitarian Response

- Food: WFP has increased delivery of emergency food supplies to the eastern valley and specifically around the city of Al-Bahr. WFP estimates they are providing emergency food supplies for close to 813,000 people. This number is expected to grow as poor and erratic rainfall combined with reduced maize production due to ongoing violence in the central regions have limited farm outputs.
- Agriculture: Pastoralists seek adaptation mechanisms against prolonged drought. Rising temperatures has been linked as a threats to livelihoods generation for most of the population. The average temperature in the past decade has risen by 0.3' compared to previous decades. The slight change has worried some agronomists working in the central areas of the country where water and crops are already highly susceptible to slight temperature variations. Experts warn that a 2' rise in temperature in areas of Nimpala could cause a near complete loss of main livelihood crops including coffee. FAO conducted a rapid crop assessment mission last month and confirmed below normal rainfall during the critical rainy season which just ended. The immediate impact will be delayed harvest in the central plains and will threaten the hunger season. The risk of reduced water supply, vulnerability to high temperatures, and new pests are all related to fears over potential climate changes impacting agricultural production.
- Nutrition: A study was released stating that over 45% of children under five are underweight and stunted due to malnutrition. The rate of acute malnutrition is estimated to have increased slightly, afflicting around 16.6% of children under the age of five. The government has announced a goal to create the national nutrition program.
- Health: Local agencies and NGOs are reporting significant increases in cases of waterborne diseases in urban areas throughout the country. Additional outbreaks of cholera have been reported in the north and through the central plain. The capital has not had any reported cases but officials are worried about a quick spread of the outbreak.

Security/Protection

- Reports of groups rearming in the north have caused alarm with central government officials in Aybodi.
- Several refugee camps reported significant fighting between the remnants of the Northeast Brotherhood in and around refugee camps in the north and the Akola resettlements.
- Cattle raiders have killed over 50 people in several areas in the eastern and central valley. Clashes over water, livestock, and pasture have increased slightly since the last reporting period.
- Concerns remain over access to education in northern regions of the country, still experiencing instability and isolated instances of violence.
- Gender-based attacks have continued to burden local communities, specifically around IDP camps and refugee camps.

Shelter and Resettlement

- IDPs: Resettlement of Akola IDP communities continue under supervision of the government. The movement of pastoralists along the central valley with resettlement has raised concerns from security experts for the potential of small scale disturbances.
- Refugees: The fighting in country B continues with signs of intensification. The Nimapalan government has indicated increased efforts are needed to reduce the flow of refugees and increase protection of border refugee camps from attacks.
- Areas around the camps have shown significant signs of environmental degradation due to pressures on resources by the growing populations in the camps.
- According to officials, disputes over land ownership are threatening resettlement of thousands of former IDPs. This is placing land as a major source of tension and impacting the poorest members of society the most.

Census

- A time frame has been established and districts are being redrawn in preparation for the anticipated census. A center for Census, Statistics and Evaluation was created to support these programs. The tools will be pre-tested before finalization for the enumeration of the 2010 census.
- Protests erupted after the center announced they would include several questions geared at determining the ethnicity of the population. Opposition formed against the polarizing impact of this information.
- Population growth rate is already estimated at 3.2%, with high fertility rates of almost 7 children per women in urban areas, highest around the capital, Aybodi. This raises concerns about extensive population growth.

Economy

- Country B and C report reduced flow of illegal timber across the borders. Nimpalan officials are planning to make an appeal for an end to the continued sanctions. The Security Council still seems poised not to lift sanctions but the President has prioritized efforts.
- Infrastructure projects are underway. Concerns remain about disrupting traditional allocation systems from the impact of building major dams or irrigation systems in central plain and north/eastern agricultural areas.

Environment

- Fear of continued rapid deforestation with estimates that the country could lose forest cover within 40 years if current rate of deforestation continues. Large portion of the country still use biomass as a primary source of energy, especially firewood for cooking.