

ETHIOPIA Food Security Outlook

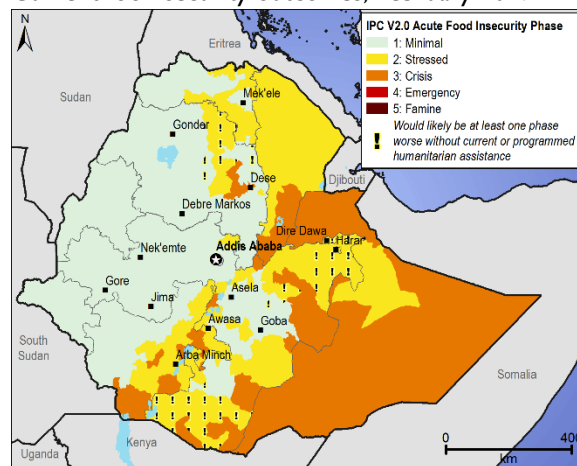
February to September 2017

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) likely in much of Somali Region, and parts of eastern Oromia and SNNPR

KEY MESSAGES

- Many poor households in southeastern Ethiopia will face food consumption gaps and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity between February and September 2017, in the absence of humanitarian assistance, following very poor performance of the October to December 2016 *Deyr/Hageya* season and resulting negative impacts on pasture and water resources, livestock productivity and livestock-to-cereal terms of trade. Some worst-affected households in Warder and Korahe Zones in Somali Region are expected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and face increased acute malnutrition in the absence of assistance between June and September 2017.
- Meher* 2016/17 harvests are estimated to be near average in most western areas of Ethiopia. However, in parts of eastern and central Oromia, northeastern SNNPR, and eastern Amhara, well below-average *Meher* harvests will lead to significantly reduced household food access and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity between February and September 2017.
- The 2017 Humanitarian Requirements Document released by the Government of Ethiopia estimates 5.6 million people will require emergency food assistance through June 2017, with funding requirements of approximately \$948 million USD. According to the HRD, the number of people in need of emergency assistance are expected to be highest in Oromia Region, followed by Somali and SNNP Regions.

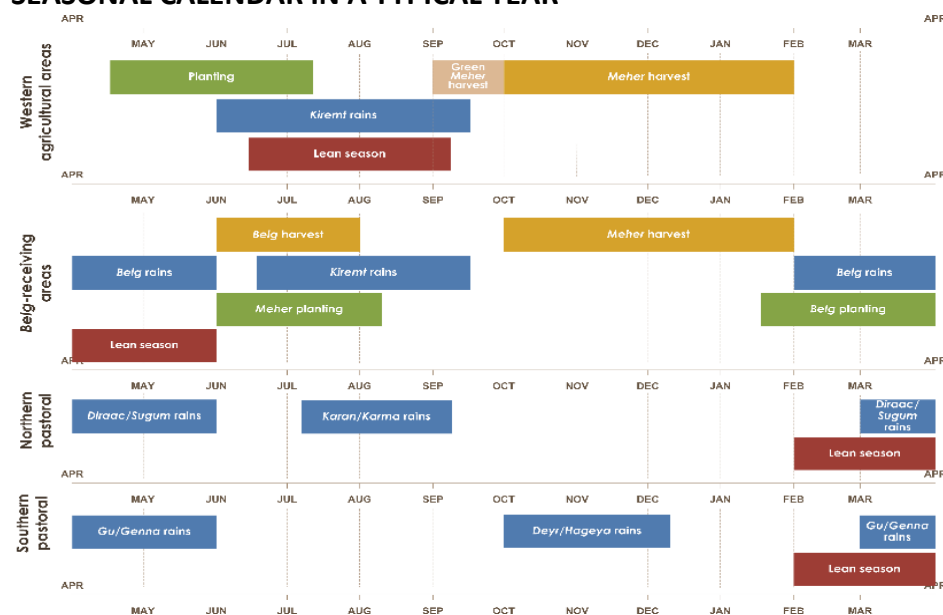
Current food security outcomes, February 2017



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#). Descriptions of the five area phase classifications used in IPC v2.0 appear below.

SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

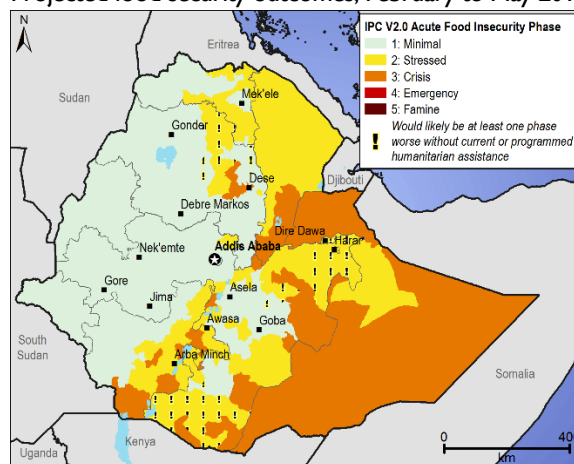
Seasonal progress. In southern and southeastern Ethiopia, October to December *Deyr/Hagaya* rainfall was late by three to six weeks, very infrequent, and well below average in terms of cumulative amounts. Rainfall performance was worst in eastern and northern Somali Region, but was also below average in southern and central Rift Valley areas of Oromia (Bale, Guji, Borena, and parts of Arsi), and South Omo in SNNPR. In some areas, very poor performance of the *Deyr/Hagaya* 2016 rains followed below-average rainfall during the March to May 2016 *Gu/Genna* rains. As a result, soil moisture between July and December 2016 was among the lowest since 1982 in many areas (Figure 1). However, additional rain has fallen in southern, southwestern, and northeastern parts of the country during mid-to-late February 2017. Although this rainfall is typical in some central areas of the country, the rainfall that occurred in Afar Region and Borena Zone of Oromia was out of season.

Pasture, water, and livestock. In southern and southeastern areas, which are largely pastoral in terms of livelihood systems, consecutively poor rainy seasons in 2016 and the dry season in between has resulted in below-average regeneration of water and pasture, which is becoming exhausted several months earlier than normal or is already exhausted in worst-affected areas. Since late 2016, large numbers of pastoral households in these areas have been migrating their livestock further than normal and to atypical areas in search of pasture and water, with large numbers of livestock concentrated around ponds and traditional wells, which has put additional pressure on these resources. Due to a lack of pasture and water, livestock body conditions – particularly for cattle and goats – are poorer than usual and deaths of cattle and some goats have been reported. In addition, there are reports of a significant number of aborted pregnancies for cows, while pastoralists in some areas are slaughtering newborn calves in order to save the life of the breeding cows. Recent rainfall in February is helping to regenerate water sources and improve water access particularly in Borena and Afar areas and is likely to help stabilize or improve livestock body conditions in these areas. Additional seasonal rainfall between March and May is needed to significantly improve body conditions and result in increases in conceptions and improved livestock prices.

Meanwhile, in Afar and Sitti Zone of Somali Region (where seasonality is different than in southern pastoral areas), consecutively near to above average seasons in 2016 have contributed to improved livestock productivity and conceptions. In southern Afar and Sitti Zone of Somali Region (where seasonality is different than in southeastern pastoral areas) poor households' livestock holdings remain lower than normal as herd sizes have not fully recovered following significant losses as a result of El Niño-related drought in 2015. Access to food and income from the sale of livestock remains below average, while income from other sources (below-average income from charcoal production, for example) continues to constrain household food access.

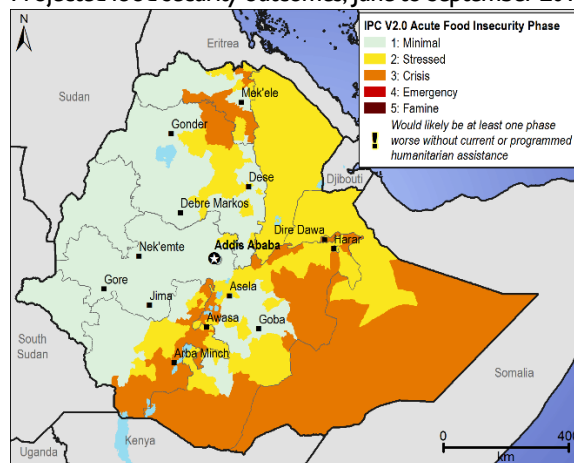
2016/17 agricultural production. Cereal production in most *Meher*-producing areas of western Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, and western areas of SNNPR regions is estimated at average or above average levels, following mostly favorable performance of the June to September *Kiremt* 2016 rainy season. Maize and sorghum are the major cereals planted and harvested in western Amhara, SNNPR, Oromia, and Tigray. According to data from the *Meher* seasonal assessments, *Meher* 2016 cereal production in Tigray Region was significantly higher than in 2015 and 4 percent lower than the recent five-year average. In Amhara Region, *Meher* 2016 production is estimated to be 19 percent higher than in 2015 and 12 percent higher the recent five-year average.

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2017



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2017



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#).

However, in lowland areas of eastern and central Oromia, lowland parts of Waghimra Zone in Amhara Region, localized areas in the Tekeze River catchments in Tigray Region, and some kebeles bordering the Abay River catchment in East Gojjam Zone of Amhara Region, *Meher* 2016 was below average. In these areas, rainfall was below average, poorly distributed over time and space, and in some cases ended earlier than usual. Moreover, in some areas colder than usual temperatures between November and January caused frost that damaged late harvested *Meher* annual and perennial crops. Chat in East and West Hararghe zone of Oromia, enset in Sidama and Gedio Zone of SNNPR and other irrigated periodic, annual and perennial crops, vegetables, and fruits were among the most affected in highlands and midlands. For example, reports from Sidama, Enset, and West Hararghe zones disclosed more than 18,000, 4,857 and 14,958 hectares of land covered with chat and other perennials severely affected by the frost, respectively.

Market supply and prices. Prices for major staple foods (sorghum, maize, and wheat grain) remained stable or declined slightly across most markets between December 2016 and January 2017, in line with seasonal trends as harvests contribute to increased market supply and household demand is seasonally low. Wholesale prices for white sorghum and wheat grain are generally 10 to 20 percent below their January 2016 levels and near the recent five-year average in most major markets. Wholesale prices for white maize are also generally similar to those observed in January 2016 and the recent five-year average. In the southern lowlands and central Rift Valley areas of Oromia, and southern SNNPR, northeastern Amhara and southern Tigray where *Meher* crop production was below average, limited availability of supplies caused an increase in staple food prices. For instance, the January 2017 maize price in Burkadimtu, Yabelo, and Hosaena markets increased 20, 7 and 6.6 percent since December 2016, and was 25, 11 and 7 percent higher, respectively, than recent five-year average.

Livestock prices are generally stable or showing slight increases in Addis Ababa and northwestern parts of the country. However, livestock prices in southern and southeastern areas of the country continue to decline and are below average, due to poorer than usual body conditions that have reduced market demand for these animals, as well as greater than usual supply on local markets as households have started to sell more livestock than usual in order to generate additional income and in order to reduce the need for expenditures on feed and water in order to sustain livestock herd sizes. These decreases in livestock prices are reducing livestock-to-cereals terms-of-trade to the disadvantage of pastoralists.

Refugees from South Sudan and Somalia. Between December 23, 2016 and February 6, 2017, approximately 4,500 South Sudanese refugees entered Ethiopia, nearly all of them in Gambella Region. This brings the total number of refugees to approximately 343,000 who have entered Ethiopia since December 2013. In October 2016 and January 2017, increased numbers of refugees fleeing Somalia have been reported in Dollo Ado, as food security conditions continue to deteriorate in parts of Somalia. Exact data on the number of new refugees arriving into Dollo Ado camp is not currently available.

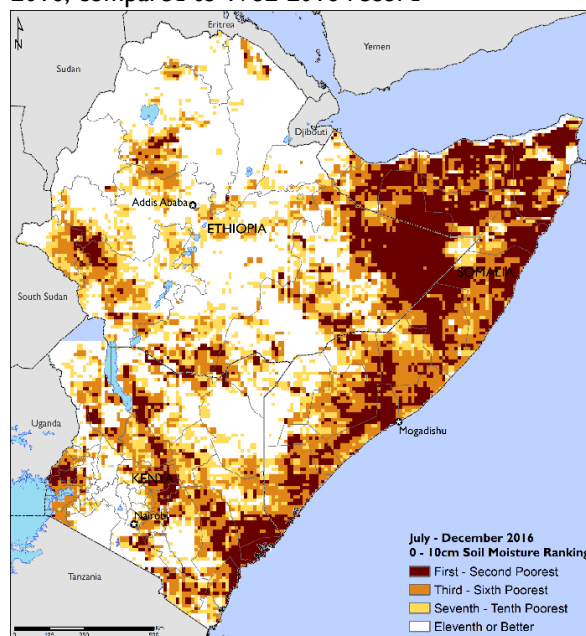
Humanitarian Requirements Document. The 2017 Humanitarian Requirements Document estimates a total of 5.6 million people will require humanitarian assistance between January and June 2017. The first round of food assistance is starting to be distributed in some areas.

Assumptions

The most-likely scenario from February 2017 to September 2017 is based on the following national-level assumptions:

- **Seasonal forecasts.** According to the National Meteorological Agency (NMA) climate outlook, March to May 2017 *Genna/Gu/Dadaa* rains are likely to be below average in most parts of SNNP, Somali, southern and southeastern Oromia and Afar regions. *Belg* 2017 rains are expected to be average to below average in most areas, but will be near average in western areas of the country. *Belg* planting and production is expected to be mostly near normal, except in areas where

Figure 1. Soil moisture ranking, July to December 2016, compared to 1982-2016 record



Source: FEWS NET/NASA

Belg rainfall is typically lowest, where reductions in rainfall are likely to limit crop growth and yields. *Kiremt* rains between June and September 2017 are likely to be average to below average in most *Meher*-producing parts of the country.

- **Pasture, browse, and water availability** for livestock are expected to improve with the onset of seasonal rainfall in March in many parts of the country. In southern and southeastern pastoral areas, anticipated below-average *Gu/Genna* rainfall between March and May is likely to lead to less pasture and water regeneration than normal, which is likely to be exhausted earlier than normal during the dry season between June and September.
- **Livestock body conditions** are expected to remain normal in most of the country due thanks to the availability of crop residue and expected increases in pasture and water with increases in seasonal rainfall between March and September. However, in southern and southeastern pastoral areas, improvements in livestock body conditions following the March to May rains are likely to be temporary. As pasture and browse are exhausted earlier than normal, body conditions are likely to deteriorate further, particularly for cattle and sheep. Livestock deaths and abortions as a result of lack of pasture and water availability are likely to be higher than normal through September 2017. Conceptions are also likely to remain low, with improvements only in camel milk production improving following increases in water and pasture availability with the March to May rains.
- **Agricultural production and household food stocks.** Agricultural and agropastoral households in most of the country will depend on own-produced food stocks as long as is usual or slightly longer, thanks to average to above-average production in most agriculturally productive areas of the country. However, in lowland woredas along the Tekeze catchment areas of Amhara and Tigray regions, and in eastern and Rift Valley agropastoral areas of Oromia, and riverine agricultural areas of Somali Region, households are likely to exhaust their food stocks several months earlier than normal, depending on the area. Access to own-produced crops is likely to improve somewhat in *Belg*-producing areas starting in June, but these improvements are likely to be shorter than usual due to anticipated below-average *Belg* 2017 production.
- **Agricultural labor opportunities** between February and June 2017 are likely to be normal but due to the anticipated high number of people in search of labor might cause the wage rate to remain low in *Belg*-producing areas of SNNPR, Amhara, central and Eastern Oromia. However, in most parts of Amhara, Tigray and central Oromia, labor availability expected to show seasonal improvement from June to December 2017 thanks to land preparation, planting, weeding and harvest labor associated with cultivation of *Meher* season crops. In general, household other income sources that normally obtained from seasonal agricultural activities, self-employment and social support expected to slightly reduced during between March to May 2017 due to below-average production during the *Meher* 2016 season.
- **Market supply and prices.** Supplies of staple cereals on markets are expected to remain at seasonally normal levels in most parts of Amhara, Tigray, and Oromia following the normal *Meher* 2016 harvests in most major cereal-producing areas of the country. Staple cereals market price will seasonally increase in June to September 2017 as market supply diminishes prior to the start of *Meher* harvests in October 2017. Livestock prices are expected to be normal to above normal in many areas but remain below average in southern and southeastern pastoral areas.
- In southern SNNPR, eastern, southern and Rift Valley areas of Oromia, agropastoral areas of Afar and northern Somali below-average production in 2016 will increase the amount of grain supply required from major surplus-producing areas. Prices are expected to follow typical seasonal trends but will remain above average in these areas. Supply of locally produced products will begin to increase in some *Belg*-producing areas starting in May/June 2017, but cereal prices will remain at seasonally high levels until harvests of *Meher* crops in November/December *Meher*.
- **PSNP** resources are planned funded and likely to be transferred to about 8 million chronically food insecure people in eight regions of the country for six months between January and June 2017 on a regular basis.
- **Humanitarian assistance** is planned for approximately 5.6 million people between January and June 2016. Although most assistance programming is not yet funded, the JEOP currently has resources to provide assistance through September 2017.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

In south and southeastern pastoral areas of the country (most parts of Somali, Southern Oromia and Southern SNNPR), food access for poor and very poor households is currently constrained as poor livestock body conditions have led to

reductions in livestock to cereals terms of trade, while access to milk is lower than usual due to low milk productivity, particularly for cattle and goats, and as livestock have been migrated away from the homestead in search of pasture and water. Admissions into therapeutic feeding programs are significantly higher than normal in this zone. In Somali Region overall, TFP admissions in October 2016 reached more than 4,000, which is 54 percent higher than in October 2015. As a result of below-average household access to food and income, households will likely face livelihoods protection deficits and some food consumption gaps between February and May 2017 and will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). With forecasts for below-average March to May 2017 *Genna/Gu* rains and poorer than usual improvements in pastoral conditions, livestock body conditions, productivity, and prices will remain below average, further constraining household access to food and income until the end of the dry season in September 2017. In the absence of humanitarian assistance, large parts of these areas are likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between June and September 2017. Some worst-affected households in Warder and parts of Korahe Zone in Somali Region will face large food consumption gaps leading to increases in acute malnutrition and will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between June and September 2017.

In the lowlands of central and eastern Oromia, the Rift Valley of SNNPR, the lowlands of Waghimra & Abay river catchment of East Gojam zone of Amhara, and Tekeze river catchments of Tigray, own production from *Meher* 2016 harvests is below average and likely to be exhausted several months earlier than normal. The earlier than normal exhaustion of food stocks, significantly lower than normal access to income from harvest labor, and prolonged periods during which households will need to access food from markets will constrain household access to staple foods, particularly toward the lean season. Worst-affected areas such as West and East Hararghe in Oromia Region are facing a second consecutive year of very poor to near-failure of crop production in 2016 following the El Niño-related drought in 2015 that resulted in Crisis (IPC Phase 3!) outcomes during the peak of the lean season in 2016. As a result, these areas will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February and September 2017, while other areas are likely to be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

In Belg-dependent areas of South and North Wollo Zones of Amhara Region, below-average *Meher* 2016 production is resulting in an earlier than normal exhaustion of household food stocks, increasing household expenditures on staple foods. Thus, these parts of the country are likely to be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from February to September 2017. During the lean season households increasingly rely on markets to access staple foods, however there is no anticipation of an increase in staple food prices as it was in the past because of near to above average sorghum production in the neighboring woredas. With the expected near-average *Belg* rain and harvest, access to food is highly likely to improve from October onwards.

Most households in the **western half of the country in western and central Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, SNNPR as well as Gambella and Benishangul Gumuz regions** are likely to maintain adequate access to food, thanks to the normal levels of household food stocks following harvests of *Meher* 2016 crops. *Meher* production byproducts and the upcoming near average *Belg* rain are expected to further improve access to pasture for livestock which will contribute to normal milk yields and livestock prices. Additionally, income from agricultural labor will increase as labor opportunities increase with *Belg* and *Meher* season agricultural activities. Therefore, these areas are likely to face Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity between February and September 2017.

In Afar and Sitti Zone of Somali Region, consecutively near to above-average seasons in 2016 have improved overall livestock conceptions and births compared to the drought-affected 2015 year, though recent dryness and depletion of pasture has resulted in lower than normal milk productivity of cows and camels. Household herd sizes are expected to remain low due to somewhat limited livestock births, deaths, and excess sale due to the impact of El Niño-induced drought in 2015, while livestock prices remain lower than usual. Income earned from other sources such as casual labor, seasonal agricultural activities, salt mining and self-employment remains low due to low labor demand. Thus, food security for poor and very poor household in central and northern parts of Afar region will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through September 2017. Southern Afar and Sitti zone and Awbere and Harshen woredas of Fafan zone of Somali region will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February to June 2017 and then move into Stressed (IPC Phase 2) because of the expected improvement in livestock holding following near-average *Sugum* and *Karma* 2017 rains.

AREAS OF CONCERN

1. Lowlands of Eastern Oromia (East and West Hararghe zones)

Current Situation

2016 seasonal performance. *Kiremt* (June to September) 2016 seasonal rainfall in the lowlands of eastern Oromia began generally on time. However, rainfall was persistently below average throughout much of the season, resulting in cumulative seasonal rainfall that was well below normal. Moreover, *Kiremt* 2016 rains were characterized by prolonged dry spells, particularly in July and August during key crop growth stages. This is the second consecutive *Kiremt* season with very poor seasonal performance, following the El Niño-related drought in 2015.

Crop production: *Meher* 2016 cropping was significantly affected by the very poor performance of the *Kiremt* rains, particularly during the fruit-setting and grain-filling stages in July and August. For example, preliminary data from the East Hararghe Zone Office of Agriculture indicates near complete losses maize and short-cycle crops in Meyu woreda, with only somewhat better performance of sorghum, which is more drought resistant. Meanwhile, in Golo Oda and Midega Tola woredas, production was well below 50 percent of the recent five-year average.

Livestock condition: Due to poor seasonal performance, livestock feed and water availability is lower than usual. Most livestock are currently dependent on water and pasture in the river valleys. Although no major livestock deaths have been reported, livestock body conditions (mainly for cattle) have declined during the past couple of months. Some resource-related conflict has also been reported in lowland parts of Chinaksen, Babile, Gursum, Meyu, and Kumbi woredas of East Hararghe Zone, which has restricted some migration of livestock in search of pasture and water. The government is currently trying to respond with emergency livestock feed for selected breeding livestock, but needs are higher than the assistance currently being provided.

Markets and prices: Despite near-average *Meher* harvests in key surplus-producing areas of western Ethiopia and in highland areas of eastern and central Oromia, prices of major staple crops have remained stable in recent months. In Burkadimtu Woreda market in West Haraghe zone, maize prices in December 2016 were even 20 to 25 percent higher than in November 2016 and the recent five-year average. Meanwhile, shoa prices have remained stable in Burkadimtu woreda, resulting in goat-to-maize terms of trade in December 2016 that were 25 percent lower than the recent five-year average.

Nutrition conditions: Nutritional status for children under five and PLW are improving from both last year and preceding months. For instance, TFP admission in Meyu woreda in East Hararghe zone of Oromia in December is lower by 18 percent from 2016 average and remains lower than the five-year average for December. In East Hararghe Zone, an average of 28,340 and 2,770 or 7 to 8 percent of children six to 59 months old were being supported by MAM and SAM treatment programs between May to October 2016, respectively. In addition, blanket supplementary food distribution for 35 percent of over 745,000 people were included along with the general food aid ration. This is attributed to extensive and continuous nutritional support projects implemented by humanitarian and UN agencies following the classification of the area as hotspot one for nutrition by Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) of the NDRMC.

Safety nets: PSNP resources are planned funded and likely to be transferred for about 890,000 chronically food insecure people in in this area of concern for 6 months between January and June 2017 on a regular basis. The first and second rounds of PSNP transfers to beneficiary households has already begun in this zone.

Humanitarian assistance: Emergency humanitarian assistance for about 605,000 people is also planned but not yet funded and likely except for woredas where the JEOP is operational, although recent rounds of relief assistance are arriving with prolonged periods of time in between. Although assistance typically does not consist of a full household ration and beneficiaries often share assistance, the amount of assistance households receive will still likely meet a large share of household feed needs.

Assumptions

In addition to the national-level assumptions described above, the following area-level assumptions are used to develop the most-likely scenario for February through September 2017:

- According to recent national and regional forecasts, March to May *Belg* 2017 rainfall in the lowlands of eastern Oromia is likely to be average tending to below average. June to September 2017 *Kiremt* rainfall is likely to be below average in this area.
- In a normal year, household food stocks typically last four to six months. However, due to well below-average *Meher* 2016 production, household food stocks in this zone will only last approximately one to two months and are already exhausted in some areas.
- Livestock body conditions and productivity is already deteriorating and expected to decline further in eastern Oromia as availability of livestock feed and water availability decline, following past successive poor seasonal performances with improvements during the *Belg* and *Kiremt* 2017 seasons likely to be limited by expected below-average rainfall.
- Staple cereal prices are likely to follow seasonal trends at somewhat above-average levels through the peak of the lean season in September 2017. Shoa-to-sorghum terms-of-trade are likely to decline seasonally as cereal prices increase seasonally and livestock prices remain generally stable.
- Major seasonal agricultural labor source, during *Belg* 2017 is likely to remain normal in the highland areas but below average in most lowland parts.
- PSNP resources are planned funded and likely to be transferred to chronically food insecure people for 6 months between January and June 2017 on a regular basis.
- Humanitarian assistance is planned but not yet funded and likely, except in JEOP operational areas where it is planned, funded and likely through at least June 2017.

Most likely Food Security Outcomes

Very poor and poor households in the lowlands of eastern Oromia are exhausting their staple food stocks much earlier than normal, following very poor *Meher* 2016 production. As households are relying on markets for more food than usual and are doing so for a longer period of time, many households are unable to cover their livelihoods protection needs and are facing some food consumption gaps in the absence of assistance. In areas where the JEOP is providing humanitarian assistance, food security is likely to be limited to Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) based on the assumption humanitarian assistance is planned, funded, and likely to be delivered through September 2017. Areas where no assistance is planned or it is not currently funded will likely be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February and May 2017.

Between June and September 2017, as household access to food and income decline due to seasonal peaks in staple food prices, prolonged periods of market dependence, and coping strategies such as borrowing and selling additional livestock become unsustainable, food consumption gaps for poor and very poor households will start to increase and these areas will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). However, continued JEOP assistance is likely to mitigate food consumption gaps and beneficiary areas will remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) in the presence of humanitarian assistance.

2. Lowland Hawd Pastoral Livelihood Zone

Current Situation

Seasonal progress: Following the near-average March to May 2016 *Gu* rainy season, the October to December 2016 Deyr season performed very poorly in Lowland Hawd Livelihood Zone. The onset of the rainy season onset was late by about one month and ceased three weeks earlier than usual. According to RFE2, cumulative seasonal rainfall was less than 25 percent of the 2001-2015 average, and was the lowest October-December rainfall on record since 2001.

Pasture, Browse and Livestock Conditions: Following the June to September 2016 *Jilaal* season, well below average October to December 2016 rainfall resulted in very poor regeneration of pasture and browse in the livelihood zone. Nevertheless, due to severe dryness in northern Somalia, the little amounts of pasture and water available attracted large movements of livestock from Owdale of Somaliland where there were no rains at all, to Shahda Buhodle, Galadi and Danot woreda of Dollo zones of Somali region of Ethiopia. The additional pressure associated with migration of livestock into the zone, combined with seasonal dryness in January and February 2017, has resulted in a much earlier than normal depletion of pasture, browse, and water.

As a result, households have migrated their livestock much earlier than normal and much farther than normal in search of pasture. For instance, 2,500-3,000 of mainly shoats and camel, accompanied by 65 families from Dalad and Wichiwachi of Kebridahar of Korahe Zone, are concentrated in Shinile Woreda (Meta areas) of Sitti Zone. Livestock feed shortages and long migration distances are resulting in very poor livestock body conditions, and increases in livestock diseases such as Pastuerolosis, Blackleg, Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia (CCPP), FMD. Atypically high numbers of different livestock species have already died and aborted due to shortage of pasture and water. For instance, in Dollo zone, household herd sizes for goats are expected to be reduced by 30 percent between January and June 2017, and by 15 percent for camels.

Moreover, the January to March 2017 dry season also aggravate the livestock feed shortage to be critical and substantially affecting livestock productivity. Goat milk production totally unavailable but camel has some milk. Those camels that migrated toward the riverine and river valleys, along Dewa-Genale and Shebele Rivers where browse availability is better, can provide up to a litter of milk per a day, which is less than 60 percent of the average yield. Prevailing drought also disrupted conception and birth and abnormally increased abortion and intensified loss of household assets. Following this, the Regional Government has undertaken a one month slaughter destocking program in 22 selected sites as of February 2017 where 40 to 50 goats are slaughtered per day on average.

Water: Well below-average October to December *Deyr* 2016 rains season, coupled with the extended *Jilaal* dry season has impacted the availability of water for human and livestock consumption. Water from most common sources such as ponds and birkas has been depleted earlier than normal. Humanitarian agencies such as IRC, OXFAM, AWDA and the Regional Government continued implementing water trucking using more than 33 trucks and provided water rationing for more than 377,756 people as of January 2017. In addition, water access problems have placed additional pressure on households to increase expenditures for water, in turn limiting resources available to purchase food.

Market: Market prices for staple foods remain above average. For instance, in January 2017, the price of sugar in Gode and Dhagahbour markets was 41 percent and 38 percent higher, respectively, than the recent five-year average. Likewise, the January 2017 price of maize price was reportedly much higher than usual in Gode market, while livestock prices are lower than normal, resulting in below-average terms-of-trade.

Assumptions

In addition to the national-level assumptions described above, the following area-level assumptions are used to develop the most-likely scenario for February through September 2017:

- According to recently released National Meteorological Agency for Ethiopia (NMA) seasonal forecast for March to May 2017, *Gu* rainfall expected to be slightly below normal.
- Pasture, browse and water availability are expected to decline further between February and March 2017. With forecasts for below-average *Gu* 2017 rainfall, pasture and water is likely to show slight improvements through June but will be depleted earlier than normal during the dry period from July to September.
- Although livestock body conditions are expected to stabilize or improve temporarily following the *Gu* rainfall, they will likely remain below average and deteriorate further until the start of the *Deyr* 2017 rains in October 2017. As a result, calving, lambing, kidding, and milk production will remain below average throughout the outlook period. Specifically, camel milk yields will likely to remain low in the range of 30 to 55 percent compared to normal, while shoat milking will be minimal or non-existent through September 2017.
- Terms of trade between livestock (goats, in the case of poor households) and staple cereals (wheat flour, maize) will remain below average driven largely by below-average prices for livestock.
- Gifts locally known as *Irmansi* are expected to be very limited between February to September 2017.
- A total of 124,607 people in the Lowland Hawd Pastoral Livelihood Zone are likely to be assisted by PSNP resources from January to June 2017.
- According to the HRD, humanitarian assistance in the form of reduced rations is planned for approximately 284,081 people out of 510,636 people living in this zone. Distributions of food assistance (through WFP) have not yet begun and funding for this assistance has been secured for two rounds but will be having a pipeline break after the 3rd round.

Most likely food security outcomes

Following much below-average performance of the October to December 2016 *Deyr* rain season, anticipated below average March to May 2017 *Gu* rain season with upcoming long dry *Jilaal* season, pasture, browse and water situation expected to further deteriorate. Below-average terms-of-trade, combined with well below-average access to livestock products such as milk will contribute to significantly reduced household access to food and income, likely resulting in food consumption gaps. As a result, households will likely be unable to meet their basic food needs until livestock conceptions and births begin to improve. As a result, poor households in Lowland Hawd Pastoral areas will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February to September 2017 in the absence of humanitarian assistance. Some worst-affected households will face large food consumption gaps leading to increases in acute malnutrition, and will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between June and September 2017.

3. Filtu-Dolo Pastoral Livelihood Zone*Current Situation*

Seasonal progress: Rainfall during the October to December 2016 *Deyr* season was well below average and was very erratically distributed over time and space. In addition, land surface temperatures during the *Jilaal* December 2016 to March 2017 dry season have been warmer than normal, which was also unfavorable for water availability and vegetation conditions. Although most areas of the zone are atypically dry, worst-affected areas include Dolo and Bokolomayo woredas in Liban Zone and Hudet woreda in Dawa Zone.

Pastoral resources, livestock body conditions, and productivity: As regeneration of pastoral resources in this zone is highly dependent on rainfall, very poor performance of the *Deyr* 2016 season has resulted in well below-normal levels of pasture, browse, and water availability. Water schemes such as hand dug wells, boreholes, deep traditional wells, ponds, motorized deep wells, and cisterns are among the major water sources used for both human and livestock consumption. As a result of below-average *Deyr* rains and higher temperatures than usual contributing to faster evaporation of unprotected water sources such as ponds, water sources have not been fully replenished and the water table is becoming very low. Most major water sources are currently dried up, except for a few motorized deep wells found in urban and peri-urban areas. As a result, households have migrated large numbers of livestock movement (particularly cattle) earlier than normal from low precipitation and poor pasture areas to areas where pasture is normally better. However, pasture resources are limited in most areas and the high concentration of livestock in these areas has depleted pasture and water sources more quickly than normal. The combination of poor resource availability and longer than normal migration distances have resulted in poor body conditions for cattle and shoats. Conceptions of cattle and shoats have declined and daily milk production for cattle is currently about 30 percent of normal in this livelihood zone. Livestock deaths, mostly from (PPR and sheep pox) have been reported, including 7,267 cattle, 22,000 shoats, 811 camels and 750 donkeys, by the zonal livestock and agricultural authorities in Liban and Dawa zones between October to December 2016.

Cereal and livestock markets and prices: Households are selling more livestock than usual in order to limit livestock expenses and increase household income. In a normal year, poor and very poor households typically would sell 2-3 shoats, with the peak periods of sale between January and March and July and September. However, this year, poor and very poor households are expected to sell 4-6 shoats, or approximately double the number in a typical year. The combination of poor livestock body conditions and increased supply of livestock on markets has resulted in lower than normal livestock prices. In addition, staple food prices are slightly higher than normal. In Filtu market of Liban Zone, maize prices in January 2017 are near their January 2016 levels, but 11 percent higher than the recent five-year average. Prices of sugar are 26 percent higher than in January 2016 and 20 percent higher than the recent five-year average. As a result of declines in below-normal livestock prices and slight increases in staple food prices, purchasing power for poor households is below normal.

Nutrition: In Liban Zone specifically, the *Deyr* 2016 seasonal assessment reported a significant increase in the number of SAM cases from 1,641 between May-October 2015 to 5,641 in May-October 2016.

Assumptions

In addition to the national-level assumptions described above, the following area-level assumptions are used to develop the most-likely scenario for February through September 2017:

- Rainfall during the March to May *Gu* 2017 season is expected to be below average.
- Pasture, browse, and water availability will remain below average, but will improve somewhat with March to May *Gu* 2017 rainfall. However, improvements will be less than usual and pastoral resources will be exhausted earlier than normal during the June to September 2017 dry season.
- Conceptions and births of cattle, camels, and shoats are expected to remain very low between February and September 2017, although camels that conceived prior to October 2016 are likely to give birth during the scenario period. The number of animals milking is likely to be less than 50 percent for cattle and 60 percent for camels. Milk yield is anticipated to decline further from 0 to 25 percent of normal for camel and nil for cattle and shoats.
- Livestock prices are expected to continue to decline until livestock body conditions start to improve slightly with increased water and pasture availability following March to May *Gu* 2017 rainfall. However, livestock prices will remain below average and begin to decline again as pasture and water availability is exhausted more quickly than normal during the June to September dry season.
- Prices of major staples are likely to increase seasonally between February and September 2017, and terms of trade between livestock and cereals will remain below average.
- Social support for poor and very poor households in southern and southeastern pastoral areas is likely to be below average as reduced livestock productivity and atypical migration, in combination with below-average terms of trade, reduce medium and better-off households' access to income and food products.

Most likely food security outcomes

Food security situation for poorer household likely to persist in the coming months. The anticipated below normal *Gu* 2017 will further deepen food security situation. Decline in herd size due to increased livestock sale and death resulted in dwindling of food from livestock and livestock products. Poor livestock body condition and increased market supply expected to lower livestock price and cash income from sale of livestock. Anticipated increase in staple market price will decline purchasing power of poorer households. Thus, households are likely to face food consumption gap over the outlook period and poor households in Liban and Dawa zones are likely to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February and September 2017, in the absence of humanitarian assistance.

4. Borena-Guji Pastoral Livelihood Zone

Current situation

Seasonal progress: Performance of the October to December 2016 Deyr/Hageya rains in the Borena-Guji Pastoral Livelihood was below average, with cumulative seasonal rainfall in Borena Zone that was about 60 percent of the 2001-2015 average, according to RFE, which is the fifth-driest October to December period since 2001. Nevertheless, seasonal rainfall was better compared to northern and central areas of Somali Region, where seasonal rainfall was less than 50 percent of average in many areas. Still, poor performance of the Deyr/Hageya rainy season follows mediocre performance of the March to May 2016 *Gu* season, which was below average in terms of cumulative rainfall and was followed by a much longer than normal period of dryness due to the late state of the *Deyr/Hageya* 2016 rains. In February 2017, the available moisture from unseasonal rainfall has helped to replenish water points.

Livestock condition: Below-average seasons in 2016 and the longer than usual dry season in between has resulted in an earlier than usual depletion of water sources, pasture, and browse. Almost all water sources, including cisterns, roof catchments, and permanent water sources (ponds, motorized and hand pumps) are dried up. Pastoral households have migrated large numbers of livestock within and outside the zone and are concentrated in areas where remaining yet limited water and pasture resources are available. Moreover, the influx of livestock movement from Kenya to Ethiopia in search of water has also added additional pressure on the scarce resources in border woredas, although some livestock from Ethiopia have also been migrated into northern Kenya in search of pasture. Body conditions for many cattle and some goats are very poor, and the Borena Zone Office of Agriculture and Livestock has estimated that since September 2016, a total of 13,873 cattle, 16,646 shoats, 228 donkey and 92 camels have died. The drought situation led to a significant number of cows to abort their pregnancy so that number of births and lactating cows declined about 24 percent and the milk yield per cow per day

has substantially declined. The migrated livestock to specific “better off” areas also causing an increased caseload of livestock diseases such as Pastuerolosis, Blackleg, Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia (CCPP), FMD, camel pox, and CBPP.

Markets and prices: Staple food prices are generally stable due to the increased supply of cereals from the western surplus-producing areas of the country. Maize prices in January 2017 are between 650 and 800 Birr/100kg, depending on the market. In Miyo woreda, the price of maize is about 750 birr/100kg, which is about 14 and 11 percent higher than the same month last year and the recent five-year average. Meanwhile, market demand for livestock has fallen sharply due to poor livestock body conditions. The January 2017 price of an average-size goat in Miyo Woreda was about 450 Birr/head, which is eight and 16 percent lower than the same month last year and recent five-year average. As a result, livestock-to-cereals terms-of-trade are somewhat below average, resulting in below-average purchasing power for pastoral households.

Health and nutrition condition: Recent CHD screening results in December 2016 show that about 5 and 29 percent of the total targeted children under five and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) respectively are malnourished. Having the high social norms of feeding child first in most households, the 29 percent of PLW being malnourished is indicating how the malnutrition in the area is a serious concern.

Assumptions

- March to May 2017 *Genna* rainfall is likely to be below average, based on national and regional forecasts.
- Cattle and shoat herd sizes are likely to decline by about 25 and 17 percent respectively between January to June as the start of March to May *Genna* 2017 rainy season will have its own additional contribution to the livestock death as their weak body condition will not cope with the cold weather while staying in the open space at night. Low birth is expected due to poor rainfall from previous season that caused abortion and low conception rate. Therefore, household level livestock holding (herd size) is likely to decline compared to the reference years.
- Livestock market prices are likely to decline further from now as their body condition is getting worse until the next rainy season starts. If the start of the next rainy season is late, further deterioration and death of livestock will occur so that demand in the market will sharply decline. On the other hand, the staple food price through September 2017 will rise seasonally and remain somewhat above average.
- Unusually high number of poor and very poor households are likely to increase charcoal and firewood sale but the price declined from 80 birr in June 2016 to 60 in December and likely to decline further in 2017 due to increased supply along the roadside. Similarly, labor supply is likely to increase and wage rates decline throughout the scenario period.
- Since the current condition is worse the middle and the better off families will not have a capacity to provide social support to the poor as usual. Therefore, the gifts for the poor and very poor households is likely to decline by 75% compared to the reference year.
- PSNP assistance is planned funded and has already been started for 260,051 people as it is a five-year committed program and will be distributed at rate of 180 Birr/person/month for six months in the year.
- With regard to the emergency humanitarian assistance, it is planned funded and likely for about 70,483 through JEOP through September 2017. However, for the remaining 83,981 beneficiaries, the assistance is not yet funded and likely. However, JEOP dispatching of first round 2017 relief assistance and specialized nutritious food aid to beneficiaries is started in this zone.

Most likely food security outcomes

The below average rainfall from two consecutive seasons in 2016 caused significant decline in livestock production and productivity. This also resulted in significant decline in food consumption mainly due to scarcity of milk production and low income from livestock. Most household increased livestock sales because of lack of pasture and high staple food prices. Therefore, death of animals due to lack of pasture and water as a result of drought, low conception rate, culling of young calves to save the breeding cows, and increased sales to satisfy household staple food demand resulted declining of livestock holding in an accelerated level. Further deterioration in food and income availability due to the anticipated below average rains in March to May 2017 Gena season is expected. Thus, declines in milk production, increases in staple food prices and low income from different sources will result in food consumption gaps poor and very poor households will be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through September 2017.