West Africa

Key Message Update

Concerning levels of food insecurity in the pastoral areas of the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin

May 2018

Key Messages:
Markets are sufficiently stocked in most of the region but are below average levels in many countries due to localized deficits and traders holding food stocks. Market demand is seasonally high, and often higher than average. Local cereal prices are slightly above average and will likely remain at this level until the lean season. Deficits in livestock pastureland in addition to the continuing decrease in exports to Nigeria continues to affect the terms of trade for livestock/cereals, a disadvantage to pastoralists.

Land preparation for the 2018/2019 agricultural season have started in the Sudanian and Sahelian zones. Rainfall forecasts published in May for June to September 2018 by the regional meteorological centers indicate higher than average rainfall totals in most all the agropastoral areas of the Sahelian countries except from central Mauritania to Chad. Similar conditions are expected in northern Benin, Togo, Nigeria and the extreme north of Cameroon. In the coastal countries, rainfall totals may be average to below-average in the south of Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia (except the southeast), and the west of Cote d’Ivoire. In the coastal areas of Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau rainfall totals may be near average.

Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity is affecting poor households in Wadi Fira, Kanem, Barh El Gazel, Batha and Moyen Chari in Chad and the east and west of Mauritania due to poor harvests. It will continue until September in the Goudam Lakes area, the Niger River Delta, the western Sahel and the pastoral areas of Gao and Timbuktu in Mali, the Sahelian region of Burkina Faso, the pastoral areas of Tahoua, Agadez, Zinder, Maradi in Niger, and many other parts of the agricultural and agropastoral areas.

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity is affecting Diffa region in Niger and the Lake Chad region due to Boko Haram conflict and will remain at this phase until September and will expand to the regions of Wadi Fria, Kanem, Barh El Gazel, Batha and Hadjer-Lamis in Chad were pastoral conditions are concerning. It will also affect CAR due to armed conflict, the extreme north of Cameroon impacted by the Boko Haram conflict, production deficits and atypically high food prices, and the center and west of Mauritania due to loss of crops and pastureland and the significant deterioration of livelihoods that negatively affect consumption for poor households.
In Nigeria, despite the general improvement of security conditions and better humanitarian access to populations affected by the conflict, these populations still face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity in the north of Yobe and in a large part of Borno, and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in the north and east of Borno, and in the neighboring areas of the forest of Sambisa (south Borno and Yobe). Security conditions and food security could be worse in the areas that are still inaccessible.

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