

# Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP)

## Monthly Early Warning Report – Aug 2022

Data referenced in this report was collected by JEOP consortium members across 51 woredas on a weekly basis over the course of the month and analyzed using quantitative and semi-quantitative methods. Please visit the JEOP EWS dashboard for detailed information for JEOP woredas (website: <http://jeop-ews.crs.org/Users/Index>. Username: JEOP EWS. Password: Jeop@user\_2019). All JEOP woredas in Tigray and some in Amhara and Oromia did not report in May due to conflict and communication limitations. JEOP received narrative reports from partners in Tigray, references included in this report.

### Highlights

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- Meher season crop performance was not satisfactory in 78% of JEOP woredas. This includes 24% of woredas that reported extremely deficient performance (>75% of crop fields dying or wilting) of crops with low prospect for harvest. Delayed onset of seasonal rain, late planting of long cycle crops and intermittent rainfall are the major reasons for poor performance of crops.
- Price of cereals showed a 28% year-to-year increase in August. The year-to-year price change rate showed a decreasing trend in the last three consecutive months, which was 45% in May, 38% in June, and 31% in July. However, the month-to-month price change continued to show a slow and steady increase; August saw a 2% increase as compared to July.
- The price of staple cereals in Tigray remains extremely high and indicated lower availability of food commodities in markets. Teff, wheat, and sorghum showed a 116%, 217% and 225 % increase, respectively, in August 2022 as compared to August 2021.
- Livestock body shape was poor in 36% of JEOP woredas and pasture availability was also below normal in 59% of woredas. Given that the rainfall season ends in mid-September, there were an unusually high number of woredas reporting lower pasture availability in August. This may indicate an early depletion of livestock feed and an eminent crisis in the livestock sector that may continue until the next rain season starting in February 2023.
- Casual labor wages increased by 22% in August 2022 as compared to August 2021, which is an insufficient increase in the face of high food prices. As compared to the five-year average for August, households could buy 32% less cereal in August 2022 with the income obtained from 15 days labor wage employment.
- JEOP's food security analysis showed critical food insecurity in 10 JEOP woredas. These include Arsi Negelle, Babile, Deder, Girawa, Haromaya, Kersa, Kombolcha, Midega Tola, Mieso, and Siraro (Oromia).

### Weather

Much of the northern half and western areas of the country received normal and above normal rain in August 2022. This has favored meher season agricultural activities in these areas. However, central eastern areas (including much of east and west hararge), some central and southwestern areas have received below normal rain<sup>i</sup>. Out of a total of 51 woredas reported in the month of August 2022, 35% reported receiving below normal rainfall. Most of these woredas are located in East and West Hararge zones and in Arsi and West Arsi JEOP operational areas. The below normal performance will affect the growth of long cycle and short cycle meher crops in these areas, which were already planted late due to delayed onset of kiremt season rainfall.

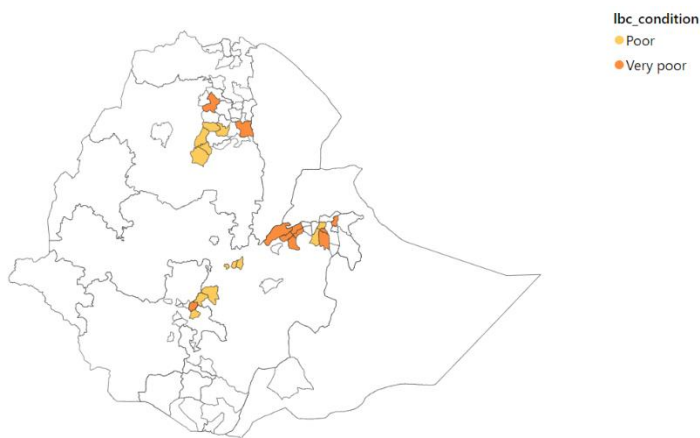
The rainfall forecast provided by the Ethiopian Meteorological Agency indicated occurrence of normal and above normal amount of rainfall in September. Seasonal forecast (September to December 2022) for the southern and southeastern Ethiopia areas are predicted to receive below normal rainfall. This could further exacerbate the drought situation in this region which developed in 2020 due to insufficient amounts of rainfall across four consecutive seasons<sup>ii</sup>.

### Recommendations

- Apply water conservation and harvesting techniques to maximize use of below normal rainfall conditions in Southern Ethiopia.
- Increase flood preparedness activities in areas expected to receive above normal rainfall.
- Apply improved agricultural technologies to take advantage of normal and above normal rainfall where this is expected.

## Livestock and Pasture

Satellite imagery showed normal and above normal vegetation availability in much of the northern half of the country, showing improvement from June and July 2022. However, vegetation greenness index remained below normal in much of southern and south eastern Ethiopia<sup>iii</sup>. JEOP weekly report indicated that pasture availability was below normal in 59% of JEOP woredas in August 2022.



Livestock situation in JEOP woredas (Jan 2022)

In normal years, pasture availability improves in July and August, and remains a key source for livestock feed throughout the dry season from October to January 2023. However, poor pasture availability reported in August of this year implies severe shortage of pastures in the upcoming months (until January 2023) and the potential decrease in livestock performance, including income from livestock and livestock products. Livestock body condition was poor in 36% of woredas and slightly poor in 37%. There were a huge proportion of woredas reporting poor shape of livestock, almost double the number of woredas reporting a similar condition in August 2021, indicating prevailing dry conditions. Water availability was also poor for both humans and livestock in 35% of JEOP woredas, which are mostly in East and West Hararge zones and

West Arsi zone. According to key informants, zonal Government in East Hararge requested water rationing at this time of the year, indicating that the kirmet season rain was unable to restore water sources. Water availability was extremely below normal in Babile, Midega Tola, Shalla, and Siraro (Oromia); Hadero Tunto and Misrak Badawacho (SNNP). This indicates that the kirmet rainy season failed to improve water availability in these woredas and there is a growing concern of a water shortage during the next dry season.

### Recommendations

- Improve livestock feed management (protecting grazing land, growing pasture in protected areas, applying rotational grazing).
- Increased range land, animal feed management, and water conservation strategies to mitigate the impact of the long dry season and erratic belg season rain.
- Increase preparedness for emergency livestock response (e.g., vaccination).

## Markets - Crop Prices

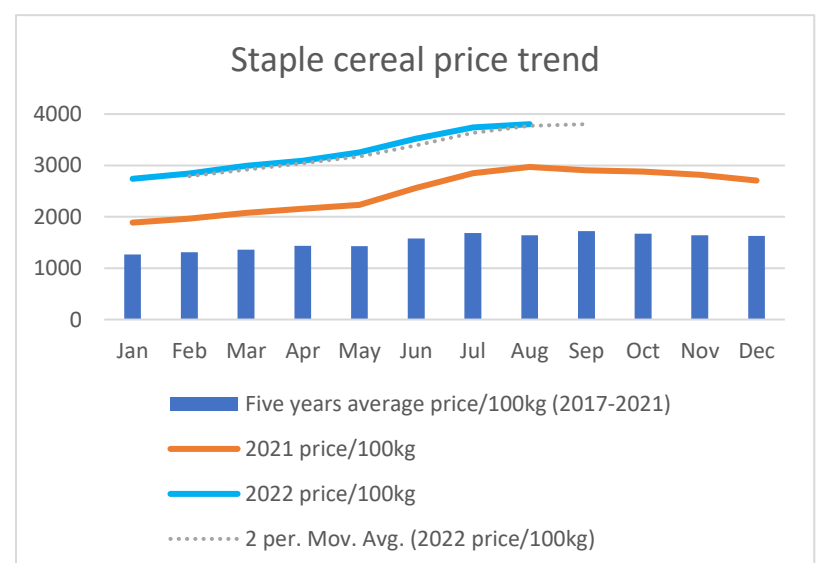
The price of staple food cereals remained high at an escalated level. The average year-to-year price showed a 28% increase in August 2022 as compared to August 2021. The year-to-year price showed a decreasing trend for three consecutive months, which was 45% in May, 38% in June, and 31% in July. The year-to-year price increased in August 2022 by 30% for maize, 25% for sorghum, 18% for wheat, and 11% for teff. The year-to-year price change decreased for all cereals in August as compared to July 2022, while wheat showed the largest year-to-year decrease from 28% in July to 18% in August. Compared with July 2022, the price of staple food cereals increased on average by 2%, which is a normal change as per historical trend. In general, JEOP's food distribution is playing a positive role in stabilizing cereal markets across JEOP woredas.

JEOP monitors the retail prices of similar or substitute commodities, across 33 selected markets. In these markets, the price of vegetable oil showed a 48% year-to-year increase in August 2022, while showing a 7% decrease compared to the price in July 2022. Similarly, field pea showed a 25% year-to-year increase in August 2022, while showing a 3% decrease from the price in July 2022.

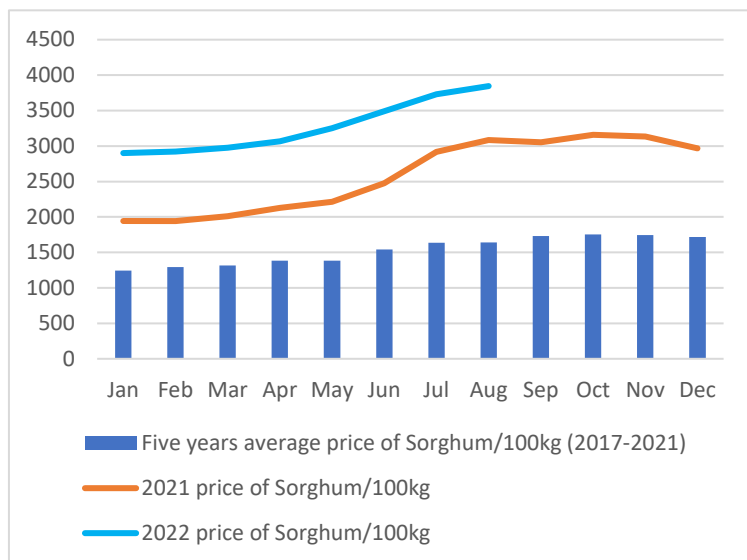
Markets in Tigray have in general suffered basic supply of commodities. Across the monitored JEOP markets in Tigray, the price of teff, wheat, and sorghum showed a 15-20%, 13-17%, and 16-21 % increase, respectively, in August 2022 as compared to prices in July 2022. The year-to-year price increase in Tigray was drastic, as teff, wheat, and sorghum increased by 116%, 217%, and 225 %, respectively in August 2022 as comparing to August 2021.

### Recommendations

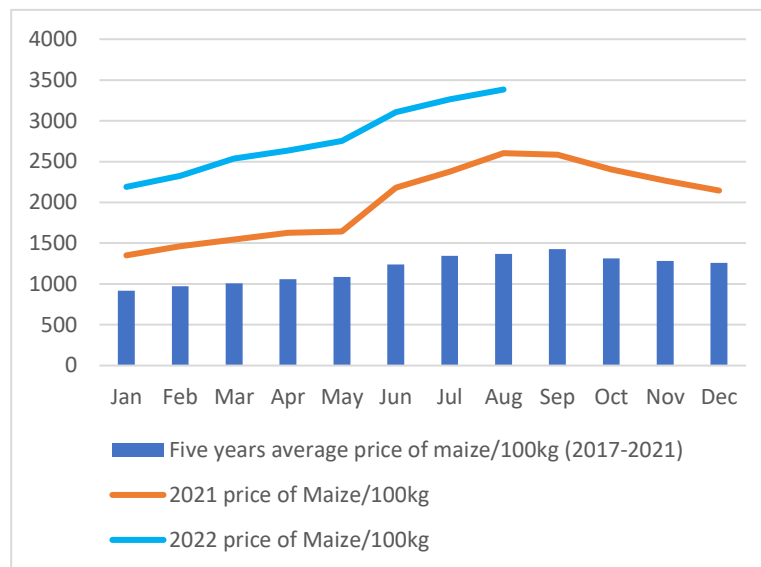
- Continued, timely in-kind assistance to stabilize prices.
- Timely inclusion of revised caseloads (following *belg* assessment) to food assistance programs.



Nominal wholesale price trend of Wheat (Birr/atl) in all JEOP woredas



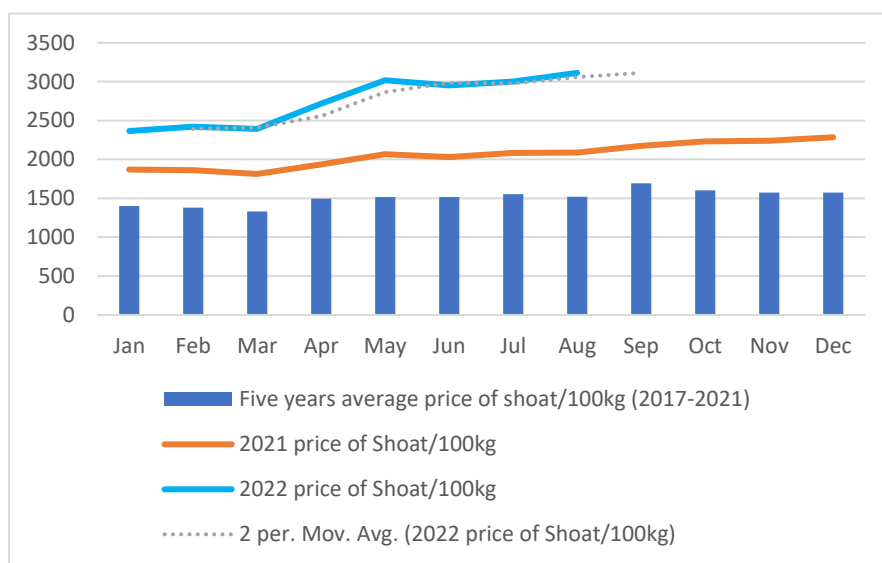
Nominal wholesale price trend of Sorghum (Birr/100kg) in all JEOP woredas



Nominal wholesale price trend of Maize (Birr/100kg) in all JEOP woredas

## Shoat

The price of shoat (sheep/goat) showed a 49% year-to-year increase in August 2022 across the JEOP woredas. As compared to the price in July 2022, the shoat price showed a 4% increase. JEOP analysis shoat price was used as a proxy indicator for a household's food access, as livelihood profiles revealed that selling shoat is the primary coping measure for households to purchase food. Analysis of terms of trade between the price of a medium-sized shoat and 50kg of staple cereal indicated that households could purchase 12% lower food in August 2022 as compared to the five-year average for the month of August. Similar analysis conducted in Tigray indicated a significant decrease in terms of trade between sell of shoat and purchase of food. In Tigray, in the month of August, households could only buy 25-28kg of wheat with the money obtained from a sell of shoat.



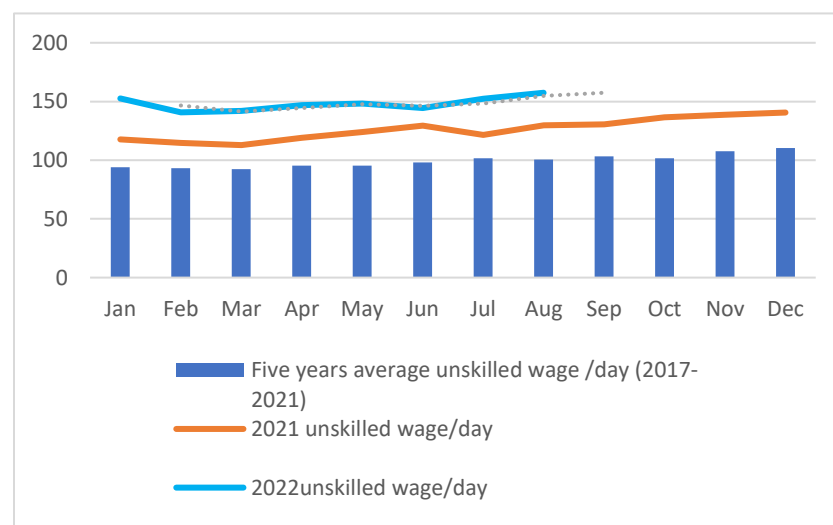
Average shoat price change for all JEOP woredas

## Recommendations

- Improve connection between local and main shoat markets, especially in woredas reporting lower terms of trade (inviting shoat exporters and large-scale traders to the woreda).
- Increase household asset protection activities (e.g., credit facilities, timely food assistance or cash provision).

## Labor

Casual labor wages increased by 22% in August 2022 as compared to August 2021. Wage rates also increased slightly by 3% in August as compared with the wage in July 2022. As most low income households engage in labor wage activities to earn income, wage rate remained a critical indicator of food access for these group of households across JEOP woredas. Terms of trade calculated for an average of 15 days income from labor wage and 50kg of staple food price indicated decreased ability of households to purchase food. According to this analysis, households could buy 32% less food with 15 days of income from the labor wage as compared to the 5-year average amount they used to buy for the month of August. This in general implies compromised food access for households engaged in labor wage activities to earn income. In Tigray, wage opportunities diminished significantly. JEOP's recent assessment showed that wage rate decreased by 33-66% across the studied woredas, significantly affecting food access for the poorest households in the region.



Average wage rate for all JEOP woredas

## Recommendations

- Timely provision of cash and food support.

- Prioritize food distribution for households relying on casual labor for a significant portion of their income.

## Malnutrition

As most woredas are in lean season, JEOP received an increasing number of malnutrition cases in August 2022. The number of woredas reported admitting more than 100 children in Outpatient Therapeutic Program (OTP) increased to 27 woredas in August 2022 from 25 woredas reported in July 2022. JEOP also tracked woredas reporting above 25 cases of severely acute malnourished children admitted in stabilization centers (SC). Six woredas: Babile, Girawa, Midega Tola, and Mieso (Oromia); Misrak Badewacho (SNNP) and Dire Dawa, reported admitting more than 25 children during the reporting period.

### Recommendations

- Increase awareness of healthy feeding practices.
- Sensitize communities and health extension workers on screening and referral services.
- Prioritize food distribution in woredas reporting high number of malnourished cases.

## Food security

JEOP conducts a food security analysis through applying semi-quantitative analysis methods on a weekly basis to collect early warning data. The analysis categorized 10 JEOP woredas as having critical food insecurity, which include Arsi Negelle, Babile, Deder, Girawa, Haromaya, Kersa, Kombolcha, Midega Tola, Mieso, and Siraro (Oromia), most of which are in east and west Hararge zones. At least 70% of outcome and stress level indicators surpassed the worst severity threshold. In addition, 21 woredas were categorized as being in a distressed food insecurity situation and 14 are in deteriorating, which is in a relatively lower severity order than woredas in critical situation. Please [see Map 2 and visit JEOP dashboard for details](#).

Current meher season crop performance was not satisfactory in 78% of JEOP woredas. Out of these, crop performance was extremely poor (>75% of crops are dying or wilting) in 24% of woredas and very poor (50-74% of crop field dying) in 22% of woredas. Multiple factors resulted in poor performance of crops, including: delayed onset of kiremt season rain, late planting of long cycle crops, intermittent rain, and lower fertilizer applications. In general, the prospective harvest is expected to decrease significantly in JEOP woredas leading to depletion of food stock sooner than expected. As JEOP expands to the southern drought affected areas, the food insecurity situation may continue to be severe as another poor rain season is forecasted from October to December 2022. The southern Ethiopia regions have suffered from poor drought conditions due to inadequate rainfall across four consecutive rain seasons since 2020. Recent reports from the Borana Zone Government indicated that the drought has resulted in severe consequences on livelihoods and caused displacement of approximately 150,000 people.

According to reports from Tigray, meher season planting coverage reached 89% in 21 JEOP woredas in Tigray. However, fertilizer application was lower compared to normal. The report indicated that more than 50% of households in these woredas utilized less than 20% of their fertilizer requirement. This may affect meher yield and prospective food availability in the region. A recent joint rapid assessment conducted in Tigray by JEOP revealed widespread engagement in negative coping strategies, including: eating unusual wild foods, livestock sale at lower prices including dairy cows and ox, selling of charcoal and firewood, reducing portion and/or number of meals, displacement from urban to rural areas, and begging. The already worse food insecurity situation in the region has been further exacerbated by prolonged conflict. High prevalence of human disease or outbreaks is often linked to food insecurity as it affects utilization, availability and access dimensions of food security. As of Sep 20, 2022, a total of 5,241,694 people were tested for COVID-19. Out of these, 493,461 tested positive, 471,851 recovered, 14,036 were active, and total deaths reached 7,572. According to reports from the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, Harana Buluk woreda (Oromia) has experienced a cholera outbreak since August 27, 2022. This placed a few neighboring JEOP woredas at risk, including Negelle Arsi, Heben Arsi and Siraro.

### Recommendations

- Emphasize vulnerability-based targeting with transparent ranking of incomes.
- Timely and continued assistance to conflict affected Northern Regions of Ethiopia.
- Prioritize food distribution activities to woredas identified as 'critical' and drought affected in southern Ethiopia (West Guji).

<sup>i</sup> Ethiopian met agency

<sup>ii</sup> Ethiopian met agency

<sup>iii</sup> FAO GIEWS

