FEWS NET responses to the questions raised during June Food Security Outlook presentation on July 22, 2020

Question 1: COVID-19 emerging trends in the coming months?

- As indicated during the presentation on July 22, COVID-19 daily case incidences are showing declining trends from late June through July (see below graphics); however, the spread is likely higher than currently known given high perception of infection rate amongst the public and continued deaths within the community in the face of limited preventive measures.

  Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases as of July 21, 2020; COVID-19 Active cases in South Sudan, Number of Infected people, as of July 18, 2020

  ![Graphs showing daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases and COVID-19 Active cases in South Sudan, Number of Infected people.](image)

  Source: data from WHO

- On the other hand, available modeling projections from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine indicate daily case incidence may peak between August and September; however, the current trends in the number of confirmed or active cases, are not supportive of the modelling given that confirmed cases are trending downwards instead. Of course, one thing to bear in mind is that modelling projections have their inherent strengths and weaknesses.

- Given limited preventive measures in public places or social gatherings, the number of COVID-19 cases is likely to rise in the near term due to both the spread of the virus and/or if testing is increased and expanded to places outside of Juba. Although there is no direct evidence, the risk of the virus spreading remains high. As mentioned during the presentation, one option for the MOH and WHO is to randomly sample the population and carry out mass testing in selected areas, especially in Juba city to see if the results or findings may correlate with the results they are currently seeing or expect to see within the community. If this is not done, it remains unclear whether cases may go up or decline in the short-term.

Question 2: In regard to market analysis, what is the impact of COVID-19 on currency exchange rate?

- COVID-19 containment measures have indirectly contributed to decline of global demands for fuel as offices/employees are teleworking from their residence. The low demands for fuel further affected net inflow of foreign currency into country. Internally, COVID-19 measures have also disrupted transportation of logistics and consignment to oil fields in Upper Nile and Unity
states and a result oil production has reduced from about 195,000 barrels per day to 170,000 barrels per day.

- Given the reduction in oil production and the indirect impact of COVID-19 measures on global demands for fuel, South Sudan revenue earnings oil exports has reduced. As major source of country foreign currency, accounting of 97 percent of the total export earnings, the reduced inflow of hard currency from oil export has contributed to the limited availability of foreign currency in the country and likely to the ongoing depreciation of local currency observed in June/July. As a result, the USD to SSP on the parallel market increased from 290 SSP/USD on 21st March prior to COVID-19 to about 370 SSP/USD as of July 24.