



Nepal Food Security Bulletin

Issue 29, October 2010

The focus of this edition is on the Mid and Far Western Hill and Mountain region

Situation Summary

This Food Security Bulletin covers the period July-September and is focused on the Mid and Far Western Hill and Mountain (MFWHM) region (typically the most food insecure region of the country). July – August is an agricultural lean period in Nepal and typically a season of increased food insecurity. In addition, flooding and landslides caused by monsoon regularly block transportation routes and result in localised crop losses.

During the 2010 monsoon 1,600 families were reportedly displaced due to flooding, the Karnali Highway and other trade routes were blocked by landslides and significant crop losses were reported in Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, western Surkhet and south-eastern Udayapur.

NeKSAP District Food Security Networks in MFWHM districts identified 163 VDCs in 12 districts that are highly food insecure.

Forty-four percent of the population in Humla and Bajura are reportedly facing a high level of food insecurity. Other districts with households that are facing a high level of food insecurity are Mugu, Kalikot, Rukum, Surkhet, Achham, Doti, Bajhang, Baitadi, Dadeldhura and Darchula. These households have both very limited food stocks and limited financial resources to purchase food. Most households are coping by reducing consumption, borrowing money or food and selling assets.

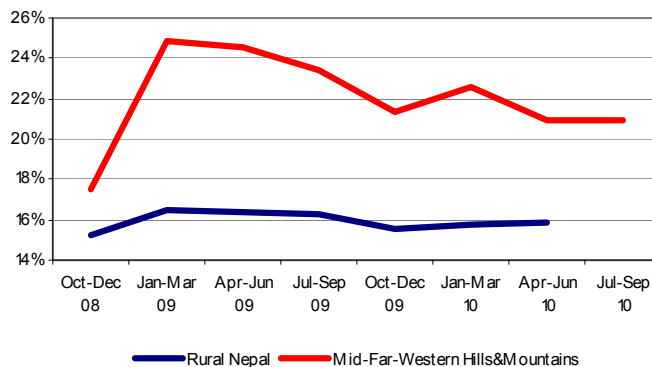
In total, 49,300 people are estimated to be highly food insecure in the Karnali region, this represents a reduction of 58 percent compared to the same period last year. The year-on-year improvement is largely the result of income from cash crops including walnuts and apples and sale of *Yarchagumba* (medicinal herb), WFP backlog payment and opening of the Tibetan border in Mugu, Humla and Dolpa districts.

The overall national food security situation began to improve in September due to the harvest of maize and an improvement in road access in hill and mountain areas following the end of the monsoon.

Maize is one of the major summer crops and the first to be harvested. At a national level, maize production is reported to be normal to moderately impaired. The national outlook for paddy and millet which will be harvested in most areas by the end of November is also expected to be normal to moderately impaired.

Despite the relatively normal national harvest, significant localised crop losses are expected in some areas. Decreases in summer crop production of between 30-50 percent are expected across multiple VDCs in the MFWHM region due to localised natural disasters, poor climatic conditions and pest infestation. Insufficient rainfall significantly reduced the area available for paddy plantation in Siraha and Saptari. In the southern belt of Siraha and western belt Saptari production is expected to decrease by 40-60 percent.

Figure 1. Percentage of population food insecure*



Hunger Overview

Food Security Cluster	Current Qtr.	Change over past	3 month outlook	6 month outlook
1. Karnali	●	↑	→	↓
2. Far-Western Hill and Mountain	●	→	↑	→
3. Rapti-Bheri Hills	●	→	↑	↓
4. Western Terai	●	→	→	→
5. Central & Eastern Terai	●	→	→	→
6. Western Hill and Mountain	●	↑	→	→
7. Central Hill and Mountain	●	→	↑	→
8. Eastern Hill and Mountain	●	↑	→	↓
Food insecure population (FMWHM)	0.6 mln	→	↑	→

Classification key See page 3 for more detailed classification explanation

- Food secure
- Highly food insecure
- Humanitarian emergency/ famine
- Moderately food insecure
- Severely food insecure

Assistance programmes including WFP Food/Cash for Work mitigated a serious deterioration in food security during the lean season.

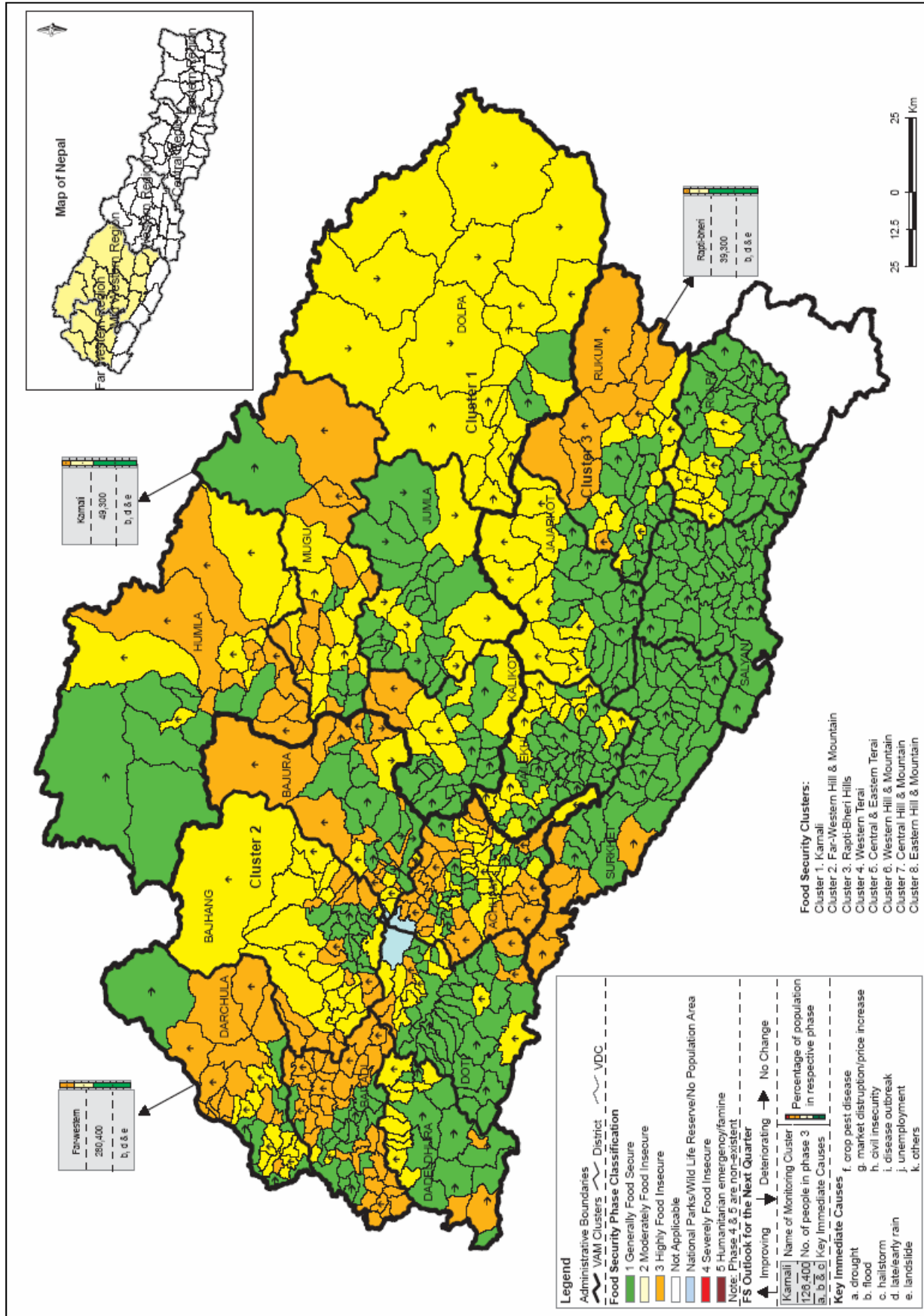
The maize harvest is at its peak and paddy and millet will be harvested by the end of November. The maize harvest that began in mid August was better than had been forecasted. At a national level the production of maize, paddy and millet is expected to be normal to moderately impaired. The food security situation is expected to improve following the completion of the summer crop harvest.

This table was prepared at the end of September and therefore represents a better situation than would have been experienced during the peak of the lean period in July and early August.

Map 1.

Nepal Food Security Map

September, 2010



An A3 size Food Security Country Map is available for download from the NeKSAP Google group: <http://www.neksap.googlegroups.com/web/FSPMAP>





Highly and Severely Food Insecure Populations

Across the Mid- and the Far-Western Hill and Mountain districts, the population of moderately, highly and severely food insecure is estimated by WFP to be 0.6 million. The number has not increased despite the agricultural lean season due to a multiple factors including provision of external assistance, income from sales of Yarchagumba (medicinal herb), apple and walnuts and opening of the Tibetan border. WFP Food for Asset productive safety net activities are assisting the majority of the food insecure population in the MFWHM.

The table below provides estimated figures of the number of people that are highly or severely food insecure and living in concentrated areas of food insecurity (reported by the NeKSAP District Food Security Networks). At this level of food insecurity, households consume a poor and inadequate diet and undertake severe and often irreversible coping strategies such as borrowing heavily and selling assets. The NeKSAP District Food Security Networks identified a total of 376,400 people as highly food insecure residing in areas classified as phase-3 in the MFWHM. The 0.6 million food insecure estimated by WFP includes people living in areas classified as phase 1 or 2.

District/VDCs affected	Highly Food Insecure	Severely Food Insecure	% of total district population
	Phase 3	Phase 4	
Cluster 1. Karnali			
Humla: Saya, Gothi, ShreeMashta, Jaira, Shreenagar, Madana, Kalika, Maila, Lali, Chhipra, and Kharpunath	22,100	0	44.4%
Mugu: Bhie, Natharpu (1,2,4,6,9), Photu (1,4,5), Jima, Ruga (1-5), Hyanglu (6-9), Kimri, Pulu, Dolphu, Khamale (7-9), Pina (4,6,7,9), Rowa (3,4,7,9), and Rara (1,2,8,9)	16,500	0	29.6%
Kalikot: Dhoulagoha, Khina	10,700	0	8.8%
Cluster 2. Far-Western Hills and Mountains			
Bajhang: Sunikot, Kotdewal, Maulali, Kailash, Gadaraya, Mashta, Parakatne, Dangaji, Byansi, Kandel, Syandi, Deulekh, Kafalseri, Deulikot, and Pipalkot	44,900	0	23.3%
Bajura: Sappata, Rugin, Jagannath, Wai, Bichhiya, Bandhu (1-5), Jukot (5-6), Chhatara (7,8), Antichaur (1), Dahakot, Gudukhati (6), Kailashmandu (1,5,6,9), Dogadi, Jugada (2,4-5), Barhabish (5), Kuldevmandu (1,3,4,7,8), Bramhatola (2,5-7)	53,900	0	43.7%
Baitadi: Amchaur, Shivanath, Udayadev, Pancheshwor, Kulau, Bilashpur, Melauli, Sharmali, Mahakali, Maharudra, Kotpetara, Nwadeu, Bhatana, Shiviling, Thalakanda, Dhungad, Sikash, Kailpal, Sakar, Basantapur, Durgaasthan, Gajari, Chaukham, Shikharpu, Shankarpur, Bhumiraj, Kotila, Kuwakot, Malladehi, Hat, Mahadevasthan, Mathairaj, Talladehi, Bijayapur, Kataujpani, Dhikarim/Rim, Dilasaini, and Dhikasintad/Sittad	69,300	0	26.2%
Dadeldhura: Jogbudha (2-3), Shirsha (9), and Alital (6)	7,400	0	5.1%
Darchula: Rapla, Ghunsa, Khandeshwori, Sunsera, Sitola, Guljar, Dhaulakot, Huti, Pipalchauri, Eyarkot, Dhuligada, Ranishikhar, Hunainath, Hikila, Dhari, and Bramhadev	30,800		21.9%
Doti: Chappali, Girichauka, Wagalek, Kanachaur, and Simchaur	12,400	0	5.1%
Achham: Kalekanda, Khaptad, Pataikot, Devasthan, Kuskot, Thanti, Rishidaha, Dhungachalna, Payal, Seudi, Balata, Warala, Sutar, Bindhyabasini, Babla, Bhairabsthan, Bhatakatiya, Sodashadevi, Basti, Hichma, Nandegada, Saukat, Layanti, Raniban, Budakot, and Dhakari	69,100	0	26.5%
Cluster 3. Rapti-Bheri Hills			
Rukum: Sisne, Hukam, RanmaMaikot, Gotamkot, Syalakhadi, Rangsi, Kol, Jang, Taksera, and Ghetma	29,300	0	13.4%
Surkhet: Lagam, Betan, Bijaura, Guthu, Chhapre, Ghatgaun, and Taranga	10,000	0	3.5%
TOTAL THIS QUARTER	376,400	0	
TOTAL LAST QUARTER (Mid & Far-Western Hill and Mountain districts only)	409,200	0	
TOTAL LAST YEAR THIS PERIOD (Mid & Far-Western Hill and Mountain districts only)	441,000	30,600	
DIFFERENCE:			
COMPARED TO LAST QUARTER	-8.0%	0	
COMPARED TO LAST YEAR THIS PERIOD	-14.6%	-100%	

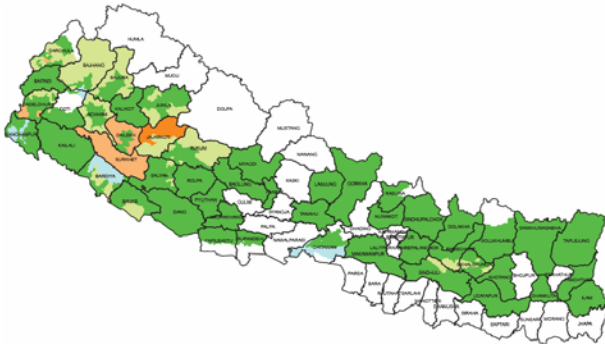
Food security classification:

- Phase 1. Food Secure – household has secure access to food.
- Phase 2. Moderately Food Insecure – household members have reduced their consumption, calorie and nutrient intake of household members is borderline sufficient. In addition, the household is undertaking coping mechanisms such as borrowing money and selling non productive assets.
- Phase 3. Highly Food Insecure – household members have significantly reduced their consumption, calorie and nutrient intake is highly deficient. In addition the household is undertaking irreversible coping mechanisms such as selling productive assets and taking children out of school.
- Phase 4. Severely Food Insecure – household members have significantly reduced their consumption, calorie and nutrient intake is highly deficient. The household has limited coping mechanisms left and is likely to be selling final assets/ land.
- Phase 5. Humanitarian Emergency - there is no opportunity for the household to gain access to food, leading to starvation if no intervention is made.

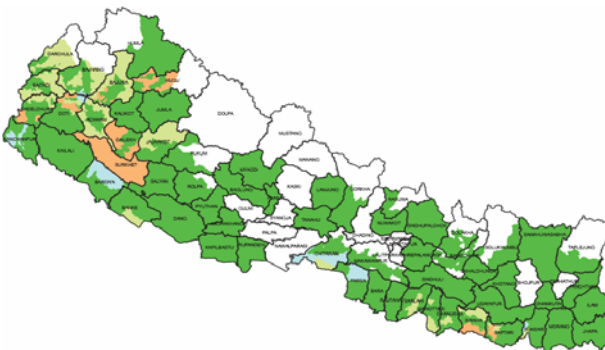


Crop production

Map 2. Maize Production Status



Map 3. Paddy Production Outlook



Map 4. Millet Production Outlook

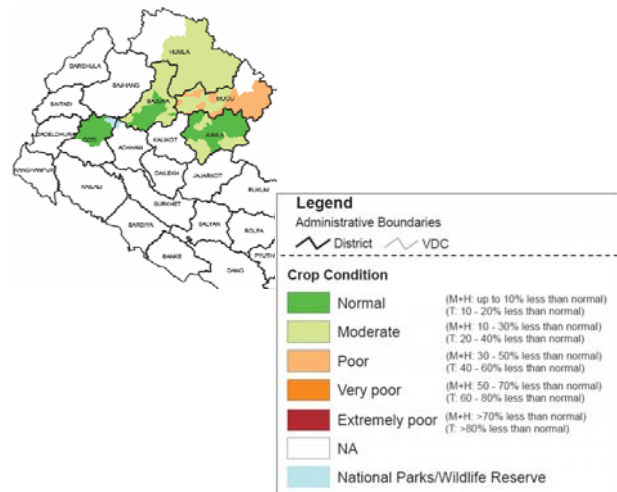


Figure 2. Paddy Production Outlook, Household Perception by Eco-Belt

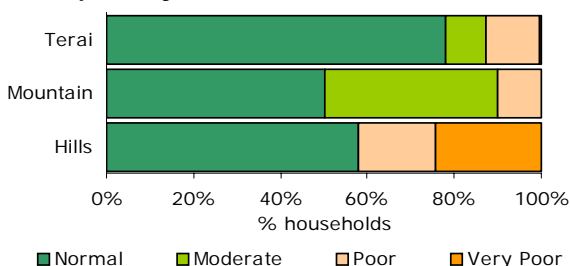
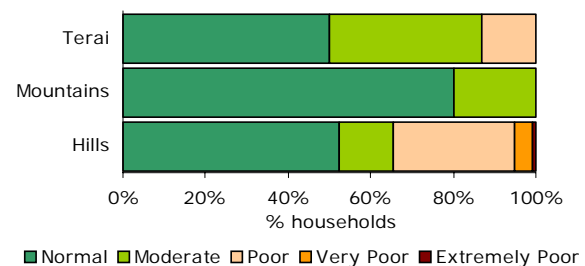


Figure 3. Maize Production Situation, Household Perception by Eco-Belt



Domestic situation

Maize and paddy

- The harvest of maize began in mid-August and the harvest of paddy will begin in early November, these two crops constitute more than 75 percent of national cereal production. According to information collected by District Agriculture Development Offices (DADOs), the total national production of both crops is expected to be normal to moderately impaired. However, significant crop losses are expected in some areas due to different factors including: insufficient rainfall at the time of plantation, excessive rain during the growing stage; landslide, strong wind and pest infestations.
- Maize plantation was delayed in most MFWHM districts by more than one month due to late and insufficient rainfall, the crop was later affected by excessive rainfall during the growing stage. In the northern part of Jajarkot, twelve VDCs experienced a 50-70 percent loss in maize production due to late rainfall, strong wind and pest infestation. Maize production losses of 30-50 percent were reported across Surkhet and in VDCs of Dailekh, Dadeldhura and Darchula.
- Late/insufficient rainfall has severely affected paddy cultivation in Saptari, Siraha, Surkhet, Dailekh, Mugu, Doti, part of Bajura and Dadeldhura; in these areas farmers have estimated crop losses of 30-50 percent. In Saptari and Siraha, late rain resulted in reduced paddy plantation of 40-50 percent.

Millet

- Millet is a major summer cereal crop in some hill and mountain districts and represents about 3-4 percent of total national cereal production. In most districts the production outlook for millet is normal or moderately impaired. However, 30-50 percent losses are expected in Mugu due to insufficient rainfall during plantation and pest infestation during the growing stage. In Bajura, a hailstorm in late October caused a severe loss of millet and paddy crops.

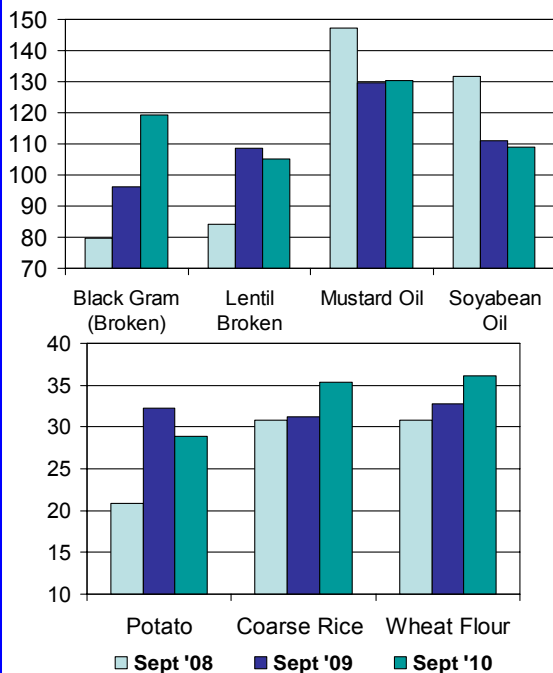
Regional/international situation

- India is Nepal's largest trading partner and the price of staple commodities in India has a significant impact on prices in Nepal. According to early government estimates, India is expecting a bumper 2010/11 summer crop; paddy production is estimated to rise by 6 percent to 80.41 million MT compared to 75.91 million MT in 2009/10.
- According to the latest FAO forecast, global cereal production in 2010 is estimated to be 2,239 million MT, this is one percent lower than last year but the third largest quantity on record. According to the forecast, the 2010 cereal production and carry-over stocks will be adequate to cover the estimated world cereal requirement in 2010/11, despite the significant losses of wheat and barley experienced in Asia CIS countries in mid 2010 ("Crop Prospects and Food Situation", FAO, September 2010).



Markets

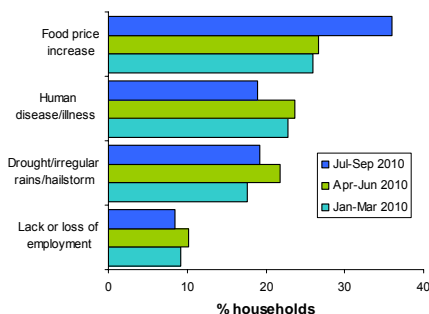
Figure 4. Staple Food Prices Sept 2008/09/10



- During the monsoon period, multiple districts in the Mid and Far Western Hills and Mountains were cut off almost entirely from all major trading routes. This included markets in: Bajura, Dailekh, Dolpa, Mugu, and Hulma. Many districts experienced food price increase during the monsoon season. In Jumla, the price of staple commodities increased by around 30-50 percent following the closure of the Karnali Highway.
- Eighty-five percent of hill and mountain markets surveyed reported that supply improved following the end of monsoon.
- Improved market supply is the result of both improved road access and also the ongoing summer harvest of paddy, maize and millet. Markets in the Mid and Far Western Hill and Mountains have generally re-stocked to normal levels following the re-opening of the Karnali Highway.
- In response to increased supply, and reduced market demand due to the summer harvest, food prices have come down in the Karnali over the past two months. In Jumla the prices of key commodities reduced by 30-50 percent following the re-opening of the Karnali Highway.
- Overall food price inflation in Nepal remains of serious concern, year-on-year food price inflation for cereals grains (and their products) increased by 17.9 percent compared to the respective increase of 5.5 percent during the same period last year.
- International grain prices began to increase from July in response to crop loss in Asian CIS countries followed by a Russian trade ban on wheat exports. In September, global wheat prices were 60-80 percent higher than in July - though prices were still one-third below their peaks in 2008 ("Crop Prospects and Food Situation", FAO, September 2010). This trend has not yet had significant impact on Nepal grain prices but continues to be monitored.

Household food security

Figure 5. Shock experienced by households



- During the July-September cycle, the major food security shock experienced by most households was an increase in food prices; 36 percent of households reported price increases. However, most households in *Highly Food Insecure* VDCs (Phase 3) cited drought/irregular rainfall as the major shock they experienced.
- As July to September is an agricultural lean season, average household food stock in the MFWHM reduced to 1.8 months compared to 3.0 months in the April to June cycle. However, the most food insecure households depleted their household food stocks during the period.
- Most households increased their reliance on food markets, in highly food insecure (phase 3) VDCs 64 percent of total household expenditure was on food and this was mostly spent on cereals. Households in Phase 3 VDCs of the MFWHM spent almost 70 percent more on purchasing staple commodities than rural households in the rest of the country. This is due to both higher food prices in these areas and lower household food production.
- The major sources of income during the July-September cycle were: sale of crops, remittances and wage labor. In mountain areas, the contribution of income from sale of NTFP (non timber forest product) including *Yarchagumba* (a medicinal herb) increased significantly.

Natural Disasters

Map 4. Flood/Landslide/Hailstorm Affected Area



- Between June and September heavy monsoon rains caused floods and landslides in forty-six districts. According to the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), as of 12th September, floods and landslides claimed 149 lives, destroyed 1,720 houses, damaged a further 2,467 and displaced more than 1,600 families.
- The worst affected areas were Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, the western belt of Surkhet and the south-eastern belt of Udayapur.
- The MFWHM experienced heavy hailstorms in late October, the worst affected district was Bajura where storms destroyed paddy and millet crops and one person was killed.





Food security outlook

- The harvest of summer crops including maize, millet and paddy will be completed by the end of November. This will improve food security at a national level as household food stocks will increase and market food prices for staple cereal crops will likely reduce.
- At a national level, the summer crop production outlook is normal to moderately impaired. However, production losses of over 30 percent are anticipated in Surkhet, parts of Jajarkot, Mugu, Dailekh, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti, and Bajura. The food security situation of affected households in these areas is anticipated to deteriorate from January onwards.
- The food security situation in Bajura and Humla remains of serious concern. Currently 53,900 people in Bajura and 22,100 people in Humla (around 44 percent of the population in both districts) are classified as *Highly Food Insecure*. Multiple VDCs in Bajura experienced significant summer crop damage due to a hail storm and the food security situation is not expected to significantly improve in these areas following the harvest. Other districts of current concern are: Mugu, Kalikot, Achham, Doti, Darchula, Baitadi, Dadeldhura, Bajhang, Rukum, and Surkhet.
- Seasonal out-migration will begin in hill and mountain areas after the winter crop plantation that will occur between November and December.
- Agricultural wage labor will be the main income source for rural households during the next quarter as this is the peak harvest season for summer crops and plantation season for winter crops.
- There remains a potential for increased bandhs and strikes relating to the prevailing political deadlock. This has the potential to impact food security through market closure, wage labor reductions, and reduced transportation of agricultural inputs and food. The situation will be closely monitored by NeKSAP during the coming months.

Detailed district food security information

The Nepal Food Security Monitoring System (NeKSAP) currently monitors 62 districts across Nepal. The information collected forms the basis for this bulletin. Detailed food security bulletins are available for download in English* and Nepalese from the NeKSAP google group <http://groups.google.com/group/NeKSAP/web/food-security-bulletin-2?hl=en>. Reports for some of the most food insecure districts are provided as an appendix to this report.

Cluster 1. Karnali

Dolpa*
Humla*
Jumla*
Kalikot*
Mugu*

Cluster 2. Western Hill & Mountain

Achham*
Bajhang*
Bajura*
Baitadi*
Dadeldhura*
Darchula*
Doti*

Cluster 3. Rapti-Bheri Hills

Dailekh*
Jajarkot*
Pyuthan
Rolpa*
Rukum*
Salyan*
Surkhet*

Cluster 4. Western Terai

Kanchanpur
Kailali
Bardiya
Banke
Dang
Kapilbastu
Rupandehi

Cluster 5. Central and Eastern Terai

Chitwan
Parsa
Bara
Rautahat
Sarlaha
Mahottari
Dhanusha
Siraha
Saptari
Sunsari

6. Western Hill and Mountain

Gorkha
Lamjung
Tanahu
Arghakhanchi
Gulmi
Parbat
Baglung
Myagdi
Mustang

7. Central Hill and Mountain

Sindhuli
Ramechhap
Dolakha
Sindhupalchok
Kavrepalanchok
Nuwakot
Rusuwa
Makawanpur

8. Eastern Hill and Mountain

Taplejung
Panchthar
Sankhuwasabha
Ilam
Okhaldunga
Khotang
Dhankuta
Udayapur
Solukhumbu

This Food Security Bulletin is based on (i) data collected from 1,150 households during July-September 2010 as a part of the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System (NeKSAP), (ii) NeKSAP District Food Security Network Meetings across 18 districts of Mid and Far Western Regions, and (iii) other information sources as referenced.



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