



Nepal Food Security Bulletin

Issue 33, November 2011

The edition focuses on the Mid and Far Western Hill and Mountain districts



Situation Summary

This issue covers the period July-September 2011 and focuses on the food security updates of the Mid and the Far Western Hill and Mountain (MFWHM) districts. 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.

Despite being the lean season, the overall food security situation remained stable compared to the same time last year and the previous year. This is mainly attributed to the good harvest of winter crops, incomes from remittances and the sale of *Yarchagumba* (medicinal herb) as well as wage employment opportunities created by the government and organizations including PAF, WFP, FINNIDA-RVWRMP, RAP and Helvetas. In addition, summer crop production of maize and paddy is reportedly good across the country.

According to the District Food Security Networks (DFSNs), the MFWHM districts are reportedly in general food secure. Out of the total of 786 VDCs in the MFWHM districts, 252 VDCs (32 percent) are classified as “moderately food insecure” (Phase 2) and the rests as “food secure” (Phase 1).

According to the preliminary estimates by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC), a record high production of summer crops of maize, paddy and millet is expected at 2.18 million MT, 5.07 million MT and 0.315 million MT, up by 14 percent, five percent, and four percent respectively compared to last year (2010/11).

In pocket areas, however, the loss of maize and pre-harvesting stage of paddy have been reported due to natural disasters such as excessive rainfall, pest infestation, landslide, flood and hailstorm. The loss of maize production is reported in different parts of the country: 50 percent loss in the south-western Dolpa, more than 30 percent loss in parts of Darchula, Jajarkot, Salyan and the northern Okhaldhunga, 10-30 percent loss in the entire Jumla as well as most of Bajhang, Darchula, Rukum and parts of Dailekh, Bajura, Dadeldhura and Okhaldhunga. Likewise paddy production is likely to decrease by 50-70 percent in Kaski (14 VDCs) and Dailekh (12 VDCs), 30-50 percent (the entire Jumla), 20-30 percent in the eastern Mugu, and 10-30 percent in the southern Mahottari, most of Darchula and the south-western Panchthar.

On the 18th September, an earthquake of 6.9 Richter scale hit 18 districts in the eastern and the central regions, which claimed seven lives, injured 64 people and destroyed more than 5,000 houses. Among others, Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, Sankhuwasabha, Terhathum, Dhankuta, Bhojpur and Khotang are the districts that have had the major impact. The GoN, NRCS, UNICEF, and CARE Nepal provided immediate relief support to the affected population.

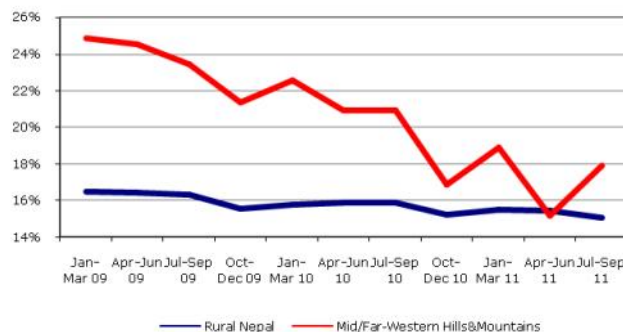
Food Security Overview

Food Security Cluster	Current	Change over	Next 3 month	Next 6 month
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 (MFWHM)	0.48 mln	→	→	→

Classification key See page 3 for more detailed classification explanation

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

Figure 1. Percentage of population food insecure



Stock of food due to good harvest of winter crops, remittance, income from the sale of *Yarchagumba*, wage employment opportunities created by development programmes contributed to a stable food security situation in the MFWHM districts.

During the monitoring cycle, The food security situation is expected to remain stable due to the positive outlook of the summer crop production.



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* A detailed description of methodology used by WFP to calculate food insecure population is provided on the NeKSAP google site: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWVfbnXUZWZvb2RzZW8Z3g6M2M2NzA4NmRiM2ZIN2M3MQ>



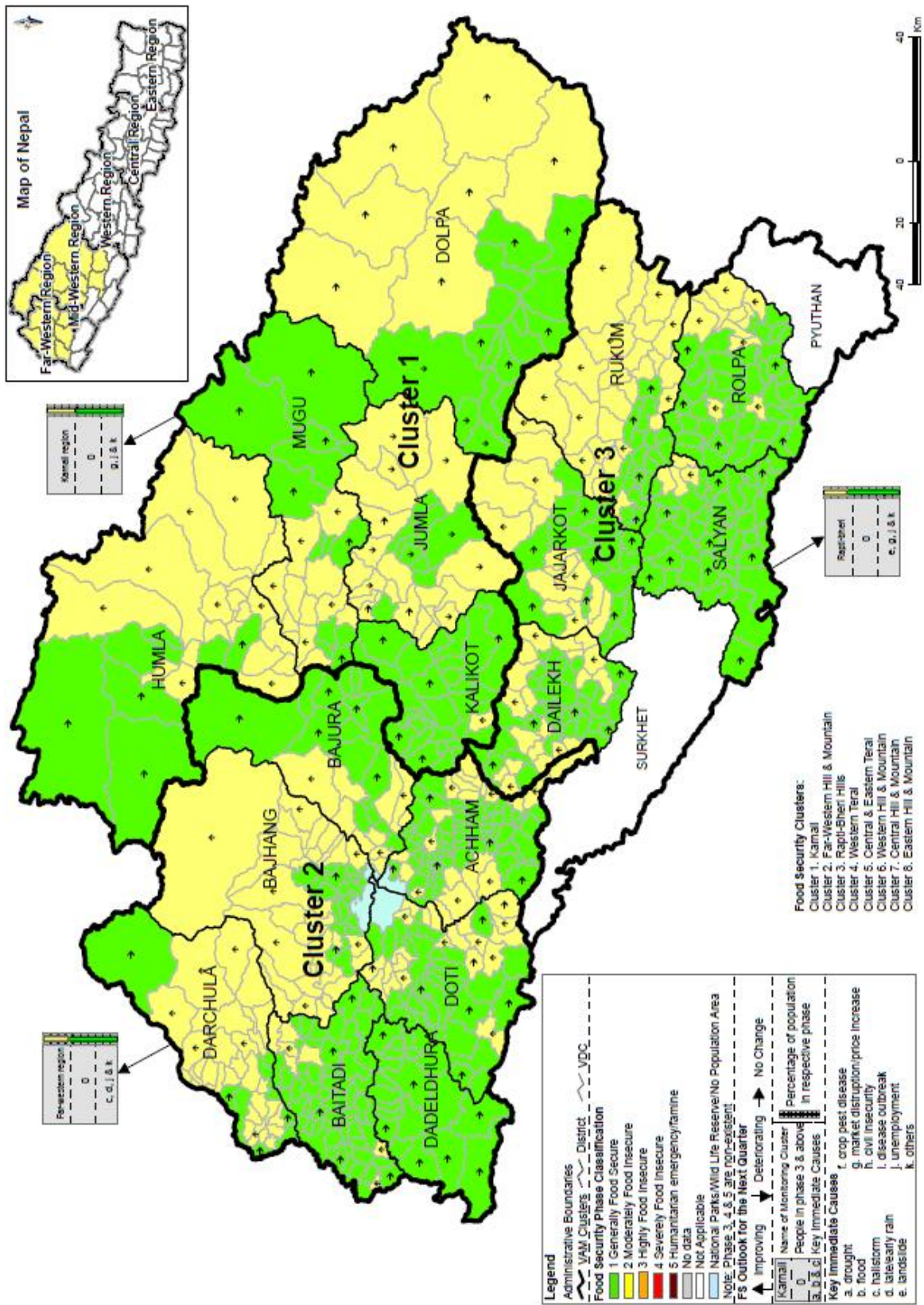
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Food Security Phase Map

Nepal Food Security Map

July–September, 2011

Map 1.



An A3 size Food Security Country Map is available for download from the NeKSAP Google site: <https://sites.google.com/site/nefoodsec/home/food-security-phase-classification-maps>





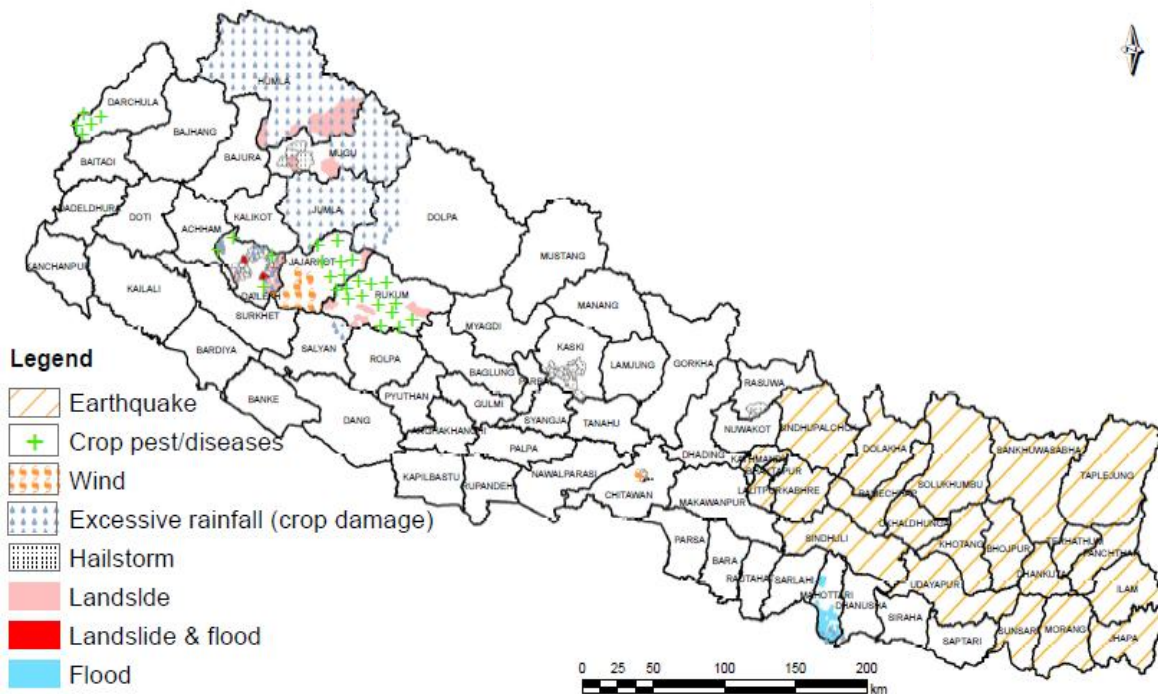
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Highly & Severely Food Insecure Populations; Natural Disasters

Highly and Severely Food Insecure Populations

Across the Mid and the Far Western Hill and Mountain (MFWHM), the population suffering from acute food insecurity is estimated by WFP to be 0.48 million*. The percentage of food insecure population in the MFWHM districts has slightly increased from 15.2 percent to 17.9 percent compared to the previous quarter (Food Security Bulletin, Issue-32) due to the agricultural lean season though the number is still less by 20 percent compared to the same time last year (0.6 million), owing to the good harvest of winter crops, incomes from remittances and the sale of *Yarchagumba* (medicinal herb), employment opportunities provided by development agencies and availability of food in the main markets. There are no VDCs classified as highly or severely food insecure (Phase-3 and Phase-4 respectively) in this quarter in the MFWHM districts.

Natural Disasters



- An earthquake of 6.9 Richter scale hit 18 districts in the eastern and central regions, which took seven lives, injured 64 people and destroyed more than 5,000 houses displacing the families. Eastern districts of Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, Sankhuwasabha, Terhathum, Dhankuta, Bhojpur, and Khotang districts had the major impact among others. The GoN, NRCS, UNICEF, and CARE Nepal provided immediate relief support to the affected families.
- Excessive rainfall, landslides, floods, strong wind, pest infestation, and hailstorms occurred in different parts of Nepal. Excessive rainfall damaged summer crops in Dolpa, Jumla, Mugu, and Humla; maize was affected by pest disease infestation in Rukum, Jajarkot, and Darchula. Floods and landslides affected pre-harvesting stage paddy in Mahottari (22 VDCs), Dailekh (12 VDCs), Humla and Mugu. Likewise, hailstorm has damaged maize and paddy in the northern Okhaldhunga, the entire Jumla and parts of Kaski (14 VDCs), Mugu and Dailekh. Landslides and floods reportedly affected crops in Rukum and Jajarkot.

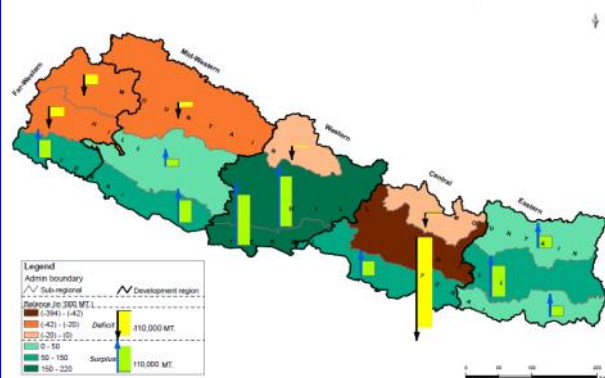
*The food insecure population estimates are based on the 2009 projected population. A detailed description of methodology used by WFP to calculate food insecure population is provided on the NeKSAP google site:

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWVpbnxuzWZvb2RzZW58Z3g6M2M2NzA4NmRiM2ZiM2M3MQ>



Crop production

Map 2. Edible Cereal Food Balance at Sub-Regional Level 2010/11 (revised based on population census 2011)



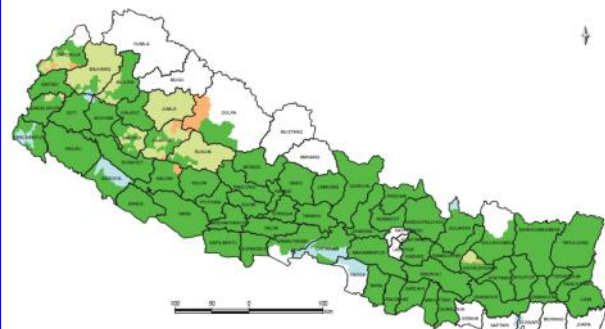
Domestic Situation

- The edible cereal food balance of 2010/11 has been revised to a surplus of 443,000 MT from the surplus of 110,000 MT, with reference to the preliminary findings of the National Population Census 2011 which suggest the total population in Nepal is 26.6 million with a population growth rate of 1.4 percent per annum as opposed to 2.25 percent (the Population Census 2001). An addendum to the Crop Situation Update June-2011 has been published by the MoAC, WFP and FAO accordingly. Despite the relatively larger surplus, 33 out of the 75 districts are food deficit and most of them are in the Mid and the Far Western Hills and Mountains (Map-2). The central hill has the largest deficit due to its large urban population.

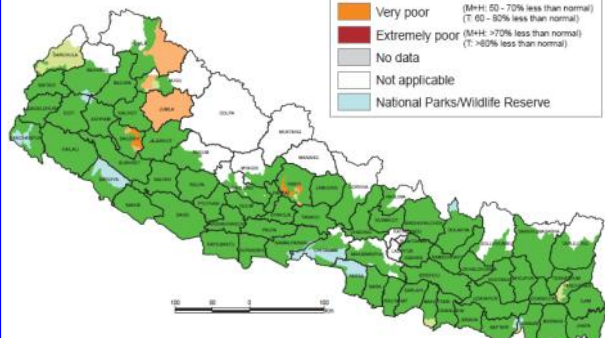
Summer Crops 2011

- Maize and paddy are the main summer crops in Nepal. Maize has already been harvested and paddy will be harvested by early December. According to the NeKSAP DFSNs and DADOs, the summer crop production outlook is good overall, which is attributed to the adequate and timely monsoon rain across the country. The MoAC preliminary estimates expect a record high production of maize, paddy, and millet at 2.18 million MT, 5.07 million MT and 0.315 million MT respectively, which represents an increase by 14 percent for maize, five percent for paddy and four percent for millet. A joint MoAC/WFP/FAO crop verification mission is planned to take place in December 2011 to assess the summer crop harvest situation.

Map 3. Maize Production



Map 4. Paddy Production Outlook



- Some pocket areas have experienced crop losses due to localized natural disasters. Maize harvest has been lost by about 50 percent in four VDCs in the south-western part of Dolpa due to excessive rainfall and disease like *grey leaf spot*. A loss of 30-35 percent has been reported in seven VDCs in the central and the southern part of Darchula due to insect and pest diseases. Excessive rain and crop diseases damaged maize by more than 30 percent in the northern and the southern Jajarkot (19 VDCs), and the north-eastern tip of Salyan (four VDCs). Hailstorm damaged maize by 30-50 percent in three VDCs and 10-30 percent in 10 VDCs in the northern Okhaldhunga. About 10-30 percent of maize production losses occurred in the entire Jumla as well as most of Bajhang, Darchula, Rukum and parts of Dailekh, Bajura and Dadeldhura.

- The NeKSAP DFSNs and DADOs from Jumla, Dailekh, Mahottari, Darchula, and Panchthar reported paddy crop losses due to localized natural disasters: hailstorm in late September/early October destroyed about 4,200 MT of paddy in Kaski (14 VDCs); incessant rain and hailstorm damaged paddy by 50-70 percent in the eastern and the north-eastern part of Dailekh (12 VDCs), affecting more than 2,000 families; likewise 30-50 percent losses have been reported in Humla (four VDCs) and 20-50 percent losses in Mugu (six VDCs); the entire Jumla has experienced a paddy loss by 30-50 percent due to hailstorm and diseases like blast. A paddy loss of 10-30 percent has been reported in the southern Mahottari (22 VDCs), most of Darchula (28 VDCs) and the south-western Panchthar (seven VDCs) due to excessive rainfall, floods and landslides.

- Millet is another important summer crop in some hill and mountain areas. The production outlook is good so far, with exceptions in Jumla and parts of Bajura where the crop was affected by excessive rain and the production is expected to decrease by 30 percent. Hailstorm in Kaski (seven VDCs) has damaged millet by about 430 MT. Local crop production of Chino and Buckwheat is reduced by about 40 percent in Humla.

Regional/Global Situation

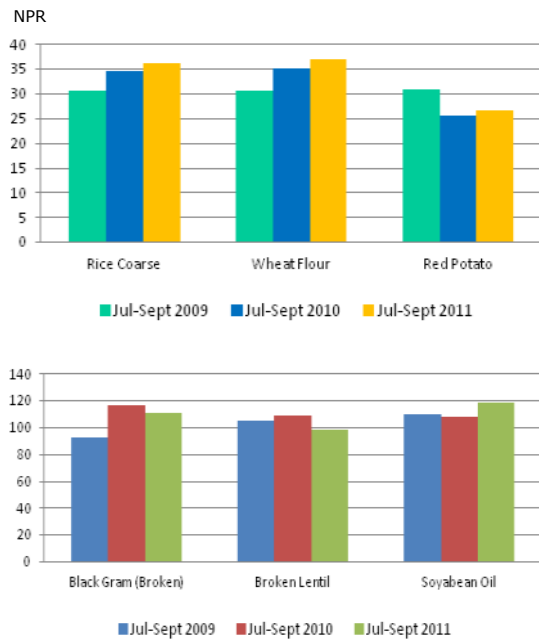
- India's rice (paddy) production 2010/11 is estimated at 150 million MT, up by 4.9 percent compared to the record high production of 2009/10.
- FAO estimates the aggregate cereal output in Asia at 1.16 billion MT, some 2.8 percent above the 2010 record harvest. However severe localized floods in parts of Asia including Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines may cause a significant reduction of the 2011 monsoon season in Asia. ("Crop Prospects and Food Situation", FAO, October 2011)





Markets

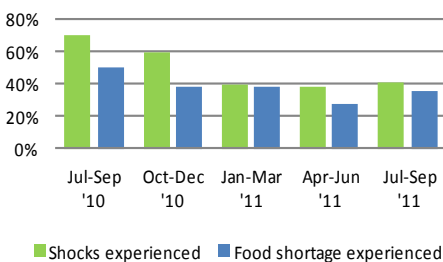
Figure 2. Staple Food Prices 2009/10/11



- Annual average consumer price inflation released by the Nepal Rastra Bank in mid-July 2011 remained constant at 9.6 percent, same as last year, while the index of food & beverage increased by 15.1 percent compared to an increase of 14.7 percent in last year. However, the index of cereals grains sub-group rose by 10.1 percent in contrast to 13.9 percent rise in last year. A higher rate of annual inflation increase is recorded in the hills (10.3%), followed by Terai (9.5%) and Kathmandu valley (9.2%) in 2010/11.
- Food at sub-regional level is reportedly well stocked including the hill and mountain markets even during the monsoon season due to relatively low road blockades and good harvest. As a result, prices of most monitored food commodities show normal fluctuations during the reporting period (July-September 2011). Prices of coarse rice and wheat flour show an upward trend over the past three years, while those of black gram and broken lentil demonstrate a declining trend compared to last year (Figure 2).
- Food prices are likely to decline in the next cycle due to near completion of summer crop harvest and smooth supplies of food commodities across the country. However, recent rise of transport cost by 10 percent on public transport may contribute to the rise in food prices.
- Supply situation across the country has improved as the transportation services resumed even in fair weather roads in the mountain and hills.

Household food security

Figure 3. Food security shock



- Reflecting the stable food security situation across the country, no significant change has been observed compared to the previous quarter in terms of the proportion of households that have reportedly experienced food security shocks. Compared to the same time last year, the proportion is significantly lower (Figure 3). Food price increase has remained as the major shock, as cited by 38 percent of those households that have experienced shock.
- Households adopting traditional coping strategies such as borrowing/buying food on credit, spending savings on food and depending on less preferred food have decreased by 30-35 percent compared to the same time last year. Similarly households resorting to distress coping strategies, like selling out of agriculture or household assets have come down by 35 percent and 65 percent respectively (Figure 4). Most of the indicators on coping remained closely comparable to that of the previous quarter.
- About 72 percent of rural households reported to have consumed acceptable diet, which were almost similar to that of the previous cycle (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Coping Strategies Comparison

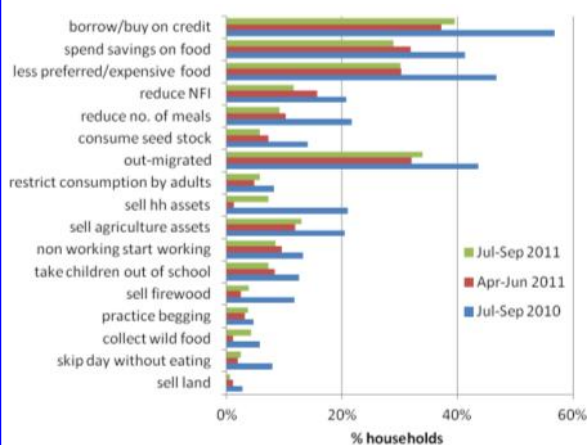
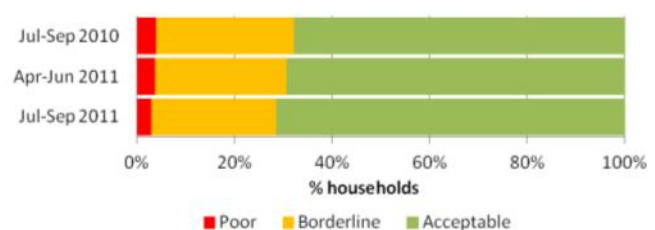


Figure 5. Food Consumption Groups



* A detailed description of methodology used by WFP to calculate food consumption group is provided on the NeKSAP google site: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVzSGRvWFpbnxuZWZvb2RzZW82Z3g6NWJfYWE1M2E0ZjFkNjNjNQ>



Food security outlook

- Summer crop of maize has been harvested whereas the paddy and millet harvest will be completed in early December. The production outlook is positive overall, which is expected to contribute to improving the food security situation. According to the MoAC preliminary estimates, a record high production of summer crops of maize, paddy and millet are expected at 2.18 million MT, 5.07 million MT, and 0.32 million MT, up by 14 percent, five percent, and four percent respectively compared to 2010/11. Localized natural disasters, however, including excessive rainfall, pest infestation, landslide, flood, and hailstorm have affected summer crops in some parts of the country. The food security situation in those affected area will be closely monitored by the NeKSAP over the next monitoring cycle.
- A traditional seasonal out-migration will start in December in the Mid and the Far Western Hill and Mountain (MFWHM) districts once the summer crop harvest and winter crop plantation are completed. The migrants will start to come back from April onwards just before the winter crop harvest.
- Since the monsoon is over, market supply is expected to improve and remain regular in most of the country. Food prices are expected to decrease and remain stable because of the harvest of summer crops.

Yarchagumba sales

Collecting/selling herbs is one of the main income sources in some of the hill and mountain districts. Particularly, the income from *Yarchagumba* (medicinal herb) sales plays a significant role in achieving the seasonal food security in Dolpa, Mugu, Humla, Darchula, Bajhang and Bajura districts.

It is reported that the *Yarchagumba* price this year went up by more than 50 percent compared to last year. In Darchula, selling price reached up to NPR 1,400,000 per kilo, up by 56 percent compared to last year. Some 4,300 households (20 percent of district's population), particularly from the central part of Darchula (17 VDCs), have engaged in the *Yarchagumba* collection, earning NPR 150,000-200,000 per household. Likewise, households in the upper Dolpa (seven VDCs) reportedly earned NPR 80,000-100,000 per household and in the north-eastern Mugu (five VDCs) earned at a range of NPR 30,000-40,000. Also the households in the central and southern Humla (13 VDCs), the eastern Bajura (eight VDCs), and the northern Bajhang (five VDCs) earned NPR 10,000-20,000 from the sale of herbs (*Katuki*, *satuwa*, *pode*, and *morel mushroom*).



Source: DFSNs, WFP Field Monitors

Detailed district food security information

The Nepal Food Security Monitoring System (NeKSAP) currently monitors 72 districts across Nepal. The information collected forms the basis for this bulletin. Detailed food security bulletins are available for download in English* and Nepali from the NeKSAP google group <https://sites.google.com/site/nefoodsec/home>. Reports for the most food insecure districts are provided as an appendix to this report.

Cluster 1. Karnali

Dolpa*
Humla*
Jumla*
Kalikot*
Mugu*

Cluster 2. Far-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

Nawalparasi
Chitwan
Parsa
Bara
Rautahat
Sarlaha
Mahottari
Dhanusha
Siraha
Saptari
Sunsari
Morang
Jhapa

Cluster 6. Western Hill and Mountain

Gorkha
Lamjung
Tanahu
Arghakhanchi
Gulmi
Palpa
Syangja
Parbat
Baglung
Myagdi
Mustang
Manang
Kaski

Cluster 7. Central Hill and Mountain

Sindhuli
Ramechhap
Dolakha
Sindhupalchok
Kavrepalanchok
Nuwakot
Rusuwa
Makwanpur
Dhading

Cluster 8. Eastern Hill and Mountain

Taplejung
Panchthar
Sankhuwasabha
Ilam
Okhaldunga
Khotang
Dhankuta
Udayapur
Solukhumbu
Bhojpur
Terhathum

This Food Security Bulletin is based on (i) data collected from 1034 households (Hill:449 households; Mountain:258 households and Terai:327 households) during July-September 2011 as a part of the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System (NeKSAP), (ii) NeKSAP District Food Security Network Meetings across 17 districts of the MFWHM districts, and (iii) other information sources as referenced.





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NeKSAP Capacity Development Project Updates

Joint MoAC/WFP project to strengthen the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System (NeKSAP)

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC) and the World Food Programme (WFP) organized a policy level exposure visit during 22-26 August 2011 to Kenya for MoAC and NPC officials to observe the implementation of the food security phase classification approach by the Government of Kenya and its institutional arrangement. The mission participated in the Kenya Food Security Steering Group meetings, sharing the experience from Nepal and understand lessons from the Kenyan experience.
- The MoAC and WFP organized the Project Review Meeting on 22 November 2011 to review the NeKSAP first phase project, which was implemented from December 2010 till October 2011. During the meeting, achievements were reviewed by activity and the participants shared experiences and learning, touching upon gaps at the technical and policy levels experienced to institutionalize the food security monitoring system in Nepal. The second phase of the NeKSAP capacity development project was also discussed during the meeting. The phase-2 project proposal has been submitted to the European Union (EU) and currently at the final stage of the approval process by the donor. The National Planning Commission (NPC), MOAC, WFP, and FAO are to collaborate in implementing the phase-2 project for the duration of four years. Against this background, a preliminary discussion was held during the review meeting and it has been agreed that a technical working group is to be formed to initiate the discussion on detailed activities and to draft the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) within a given timeframe.



NeKSAP, Project Review Meeting



Sharing and discussion on NeKSAP, second phase project