

Price Monitoring and Analysis Country Brief

Liberia

May 2010

Key Messages

- Prices in local markets remain high and are particularly high in the inlands and remote markets.
- The political and security situation remains stable but fragile.
- There is a general agreement between concerned agencies on a very worrisome food security situation.
- The government is implementing trade policies and promoting agricultural production while assisting the food insecure through WFP interventions.

Background

Liberia's total population was 3,793 million in 2008 with a 4% annual growth rate; 83% of the population was living below the poverty line of 1\$ per day; and 40% was reported as undernourished.

Economic Indicators	View Data
Total Population - 2008 (WB)	3793400
Population growth rate - 2008 (WB)	4%
GNI per capita, \$ PPP - 2008 (WB)	300
Population below 1\$ PPP per day - 2007 (MDGI)	83%
Rural population - 2007 (WB)	41%
Agriculture, value added (% of GDP) - 2007 (WB)	53%

Food Consumption	
Undernourished Population - 2005 (FAO)	40%
Cereal share in total dietary energy consumption - 2005 (FAO)	40%
Meat share in total dietary energy consumption	n.a.

Health Indicators	
Pop. with sustainable access to improved sanitation - 2006 (WHO)	32%
Life expectancy at birth (years) both sexes - 2006 (WHO)	44
Pop. with access to improved drinking water sources - 2006 (WHO)	64%
Prevalence of HIV among adults aged >= 15 years	n.a.

Prices

In January 2010, after a good 2009 harvest, and improved market supplies, lower local rice prices were registered throughout the country. However, in March, diminishing supply of local rice stocks marked a subsequent rise in prices, nearly 10% higher than the previous month. In March, imported rice prices have declined, but remain higher than local rice prices. In inland and remote markets, which are significantly distant from the main ports, prices are generally higher due to high transportation costs.

Natural Disasters, Drought and Conflicts

The mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was extended by the UN Security Council until 30 September 2010. The overall security situation in the country remained generally stable, but fragile. The President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, assured the formulation of a strategy for national reconciliation, peace and justice. However high levels of food insecurity are reported in the country due to poor market access, inadequate social services and infrastructure. Overall the recovery from the damages caused by the war is very slow.

Refugees and IDPs	2006	2007	2008
Total in the country	362022	54920	21066
Total outside the country	511335	139439	88413

Source: [UNHCR](#) Statistical Online Population Database, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Data extracted on 22/10/2009.

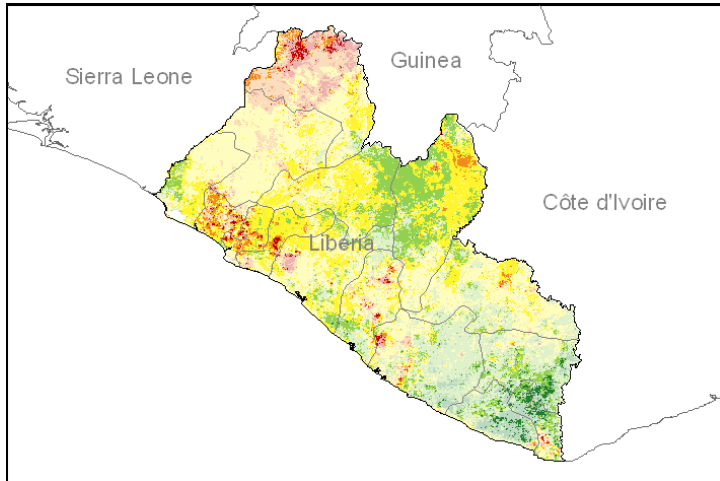
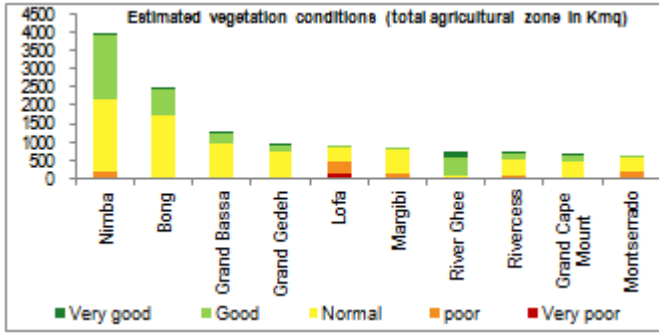
Disaster Type (last year)	Date	Location	Alert
No Floods	-	-	-
No Earthquakes	-	-	-

Source: [Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System](#) - 3 = 1000 or more people killed or 800000 or more people displaced. 2 = 100 or more people killed or 80000 or more displaced.

Information required to draw this chart is not available.

Vegetation Condition

At the beginning of the rainy season normal to good vegetation conditions are observed throughout the country except for the Lofa province where poor conditions are punctually observed. The general indicator of vegetation condition provided below is the relative difference between the NDVI for April 2010 and the average of the last 10 years, calculated on the agricultural zones derived from the GLOBCOVER land cover database (2005).



Source: JRC MARS à FoodSec

Food Security Situation

A joint government/UN assessment at the end of 2009 indicates that 11.3% of the population was food insecure, while 38% was highly vulnerable to food insecurity. GIEWS reports widespread lack of access, with highest rates of food insecurity in rural regions in the south-east. WFP predicts very high hunger and IFPRI an alarming situation in the long term.

CURRENT EMERGENCY ASSESMENT

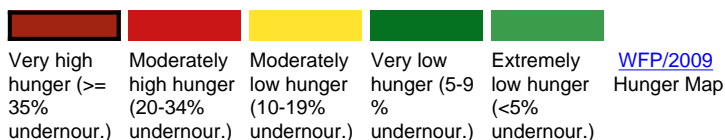


FAO/GIEWS CPFS 2010

Liberia is not covered by FEWSNET. FEWSNET coverage is limited 14 African countries 1 Caribbean (Haiti) and 1 Central Asia (Afghanistan). Food security status is given for different parts of the country in each case.

FEWSNET

SCALE OF HUNGER



WFP/2009 Hunger Map



IFPRI/2009 GHI

Food Balance Sheet

Harvesting of rice crop was completed at the end of 2009. According to the latest government estimates, rice production (paddy) was estimated at 292,950 tonnes, increasing by 5% compared to the previous year. Imports for 2010 marketing year are estimated at 383,000 tonnes compared to 279,000 tonnes of the previous year.

Liberia				
Cereal production				
	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 estimate	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	174	279	293	5
Total	174	279	293	5

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Source: GIEWS Country Briefs

Government Policies

The Govt has eliminated taxes on imported rice and reduced trade tariffs within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). To boost local food production it has created a fund at the Central Bank to purchase home-grown rice. Import duties were reduced. The Govt, with the UN, has launched a Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme targeting the ultra poor households and the Purchase for Progress (P4P) Programme to support 6,000 smallholder farmers.

Consumer and market oriented measures	Elimination of taxes on rice imports; reduced trade tariffs; purchase of rice.
Producer oriented measures	n.a.
Trade policy measures	Reduce tariffs.
Safety net (increased or introduced)	Cash transfers; P4P programme (WFP).

Different sources

Current events to watch (Click to see the full report)

No News Found

For more information, contact: Information-for-action@fao.org
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