AN OVERVIEW

**Food prices were higher than average:** According to data from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), main staple prices in July were higher than five-year average, with an increase of about 33 percent. Prices were also higher than same time last year, but slightly lower compared to previous month.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages consumer price index in July was stable compared to June, while higher than same time last year by 11.5 percent (Figure 1). The signal of inflation reflected in consumer prices increases the cost to about 30 percent; which would be lower and increase purchasing power in case of enough market supply (Figure 2). This continues to exert significant pressure on households’ resources and ability to meet basic needs, mostly because income levels do not proportionally increase with prices.

**Figure 1:** Evolution of food and non-alcoholic beverages consumer price index

- Key staple prices were higher than their respective five-year averages by around 33 percent; which translates into weakened purchasing power of the most vulnerable.
- Deterioration of pasture conditions and milk availability persists due to ongoing slightly drier than normal post-harvest season.
- July usually marks the start of season C, which ends in September and generally involves marshland cultivation.
Figure 2: July 2017 prices (RWF/kg) and anomalies

Source: Based on NISR price data
Slightly drier than normal vegetation conditions prevail countrywide: June-July marks long dry season, but also season C farming activities. Season C usually happens in marshlands and is less prone to weather conditions, except in case of extreme events. Animal body conditions, pasture and milk availability are most likely adversely affected by drier vegetation (Figure 3) till the next rains in September; which continues to slightly impact on livelihoods of households engaged in livestock.

Figure 3: Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) anomalies.

These depict the deviation of current vegetation conditions from the average. In other words, current vegetation index compared to the Long Term Average (LTA), might result in positive (above average or greener than normal) or negative (below average or drier than normal) percentages. As indicated below, June-July NDVI levels ranged from 10 to 20 percent below normal.


Figure 4: Seasonal calendar

Source: [www.fews.net](http://www.fews.net)