“Drought impact on the agriculture sector”

Preliminary findings of Drought Assessment conducted by FAO and UNDP

September 2015

The drought has started in autumn of 2014 and is still persisting, with limited precipitation across the country; it has been compounded by high summer temperatures further impacting the agricultural production and yields;

The distribution of the limited precipitation has not been equal, and parts of some rayon’s have not received any significant precipitation in more than 5 months; therefore the effects of the drought are scattered with significant differences in severity even on Primaria level;

National yields of winter cereals are estimated to be lower compared to the five year average. Regional averages are estimated to be between 20 and 50% lower pending on the region.

The drought has mostly affected the autumn crops (maize, sunflower, maize – between 50 and 70% of the cultivated land). In the most affected villages producers will obtain reduced yields on autumn crops by 50-80% depending on the region.

The most affected farmers face constraints to break even on their investments and will face constraints to invest in the next agricultural season.

The national cattle herd is expected to reduce at an increased rate (4-6% reduction in 2015 depending on the region) compared to the five year average reduction (2.8%/annum). The prices of maize grain and the exchange rate of the Lei during the winter will significantly contribute to the outcome.

Food security might be threatened in small farmers who cultivate their land themselves (5-15% of the land owners pending on the region);

The drought has significantly limited the possibilities for cultivation of the land impacting the sowing of winter cereals. Without significant precipitation by mid-October large areas of arable land might remain uncultivated, significantly affecting the agricultural production and potentially the food security in 2016.