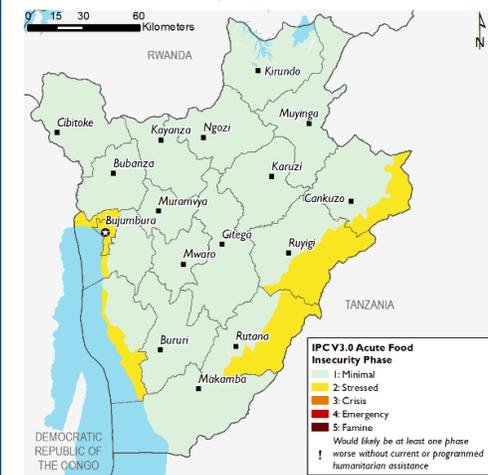


*Late start of short rains in localized areas delaying 2021 Season A; likely to extend the lean period*

**KEY MESSAGES**

- To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, borders remain closed to the movement of people, reducing, in effect, cross-border income earning opportunities and imported food supply. This, along with above-average staple food prices, is increasing the severity of the October to December lean period for poor and very poor households in Eastern Lowlands and Imbo Plains livelihood zones. In these livelihood zones, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are expected through the outlook period.
- NOAA, USGS, and ICPAC forecast that the October to December short rains will likely be near-average nationally (90-110 percent), with localized areas of slightly below-average rainfall (76-90 percent). The rains typically start in mid-September, but the start was delayed until the end of October this year and so far below-average rainfall has been reported in low altitude areas, particularly the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone. The late start of the short rains in the third week of October is delaying 2021 Season A sowing by more than one month.
- At least 20,000 returnees who arrived from Tanzania and Rwanda in March through August were unable to cultivate 2020 Season B crops and have exhausted the three-month humanitarian assistance they receive upon arrival. Most returnees are located in the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone. Without their own agricultural production and with limited access to income sources, it is expected that they will experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes throughout the outlook period. IDPs in the Imbo Plains, most of whom are displaced by flooding and are negatively affected by COVID-19 border restrictions, have reduced from 50,000 to 25,000 since the start of the dry season. It is anticipated that these remaining IDPs will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes throughout the outlook period. Among the 81,000 Congolese refugees hosted in Burundi, 50,000 benefit from humanitarian assistance and are experiencing None! (IPC Phase 1!) outcomes. The other 31,000 refugees living in urban areas and are likely in Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

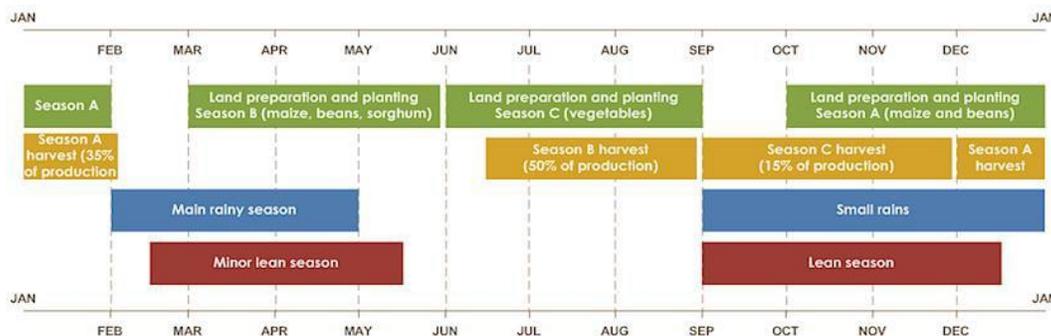
Current food security outcomes, October 2020



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

**SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR**



Source: FEWS NET

## NATIONAL OVERVIEW

### Current Situation

Food security for the period of analysis is characterized by the lean period from October to December/January, following the depletion of 2020 Season B stocks but aided by 2020 Season C crop production, which accounts for 15 percent of annual production. Finally, the implementation of 2021 Season A will begin in October and be harvested in January and February, accounting for 35 percent of annual production.

### Rainfall

The 2021 Season A rainfall (short rains season) started normally in the middle of September in high altitude areas. However, a rainfall delay of near one month has been observed in the middle and lowlands areas of Northern Lowlands, Eastern Dry Plateaus, Imbo Plains, and Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones where rainfall didn't begin in earnest until the final dekad of October.

### Prices

It's estimated that around 60 percent of rural households will exhaust food stocks in October 2020 and food access will depend heavily on market access, as is seasonally typical, though purchasing power has fallen with increased prices. High dependency on markets will occur during a period of high prices. Food prices increased 22 percent and 12 percent for beans and maize, respectively, between July and September (Figure 1), as the lean season period began, contributing to seasonally reduced food access for poor and very poor households. In addition to seasonal increases, September 2020 prices remain six to 25 percent above the five-year average. Maize and rice, however, have benefitted from favorable conditions, keeping prices in line with the five-year average.

### COVID-19

The Ministry of Health confirmed 558 COVID-19 cases as of the end of October 2020. A slight increase in new daily cases was reported at the end of September, primarily from illicit travelers from neighboring countries. As a result, borders remain closed to the movement of people. Border closures continue to negatively affect market supplies and poor households' livelihoods by reducing income-earning activities, particularly among those in Eastern Lowlands, Imbo Plains, and Buragane livelihood zones.

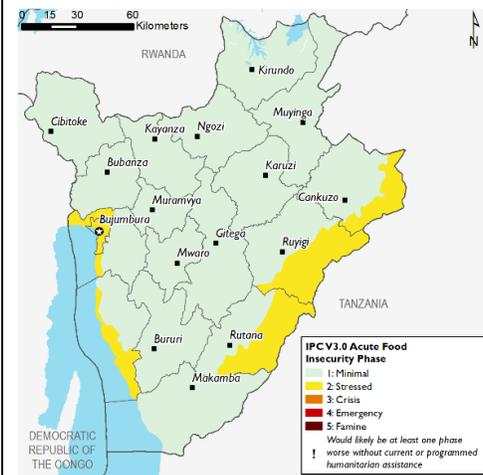
### Macroeconomy

Year on year inflation rate reached 6.6 percent in September 2020, driven in large part by an increase in food price inflation, which reached 11 percent. The BIF continued to depreciate against global and regional currencies since the beginning of the year. This is, in effect, making imports more expensive and incentivizing farmers to try to illicitly sell their production in neighboring countries such as Tanzania, both of which will have implications on food supplies and prices.

### Income

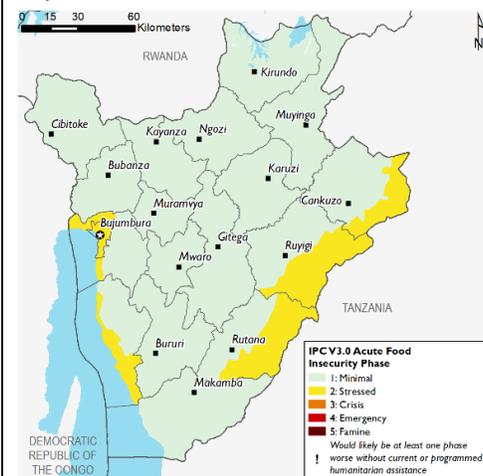
Subsistence farming is the main source of income for almost 88 percent of households nationally according to WFP/FSMS in July 2020, and agricultural labor is a particularly important income source in Northern Lowlands, Buragane, East Arid Plateaus, and Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones (Figure 2). Livestock and petty trade are also main sources of income for rural households. According to the September WFP mVam bulletin, the median daily salary is estimated at 2,570 BIF and varies between 2,000 BIF and 3,660 BIF across the country. Wages are higher in urban areas like the Imbo Plains and Congo-Nile Ridge, and lower the Northern Lowlands and Eastern Dry Plateaus livelihood zones due to relatively high population and the scarcity of cultivable lands. Nationally, income earning opportunities are close to average; however, labor wages have remained stable for almost three years while food prices have increased, resulting in the depreciation of the terms of trade.

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

For example, from June to August 2020, the average daily labor wage increased by 2.4 percent, while bean prices increased by 23 percent for the same period.

**Remittances**

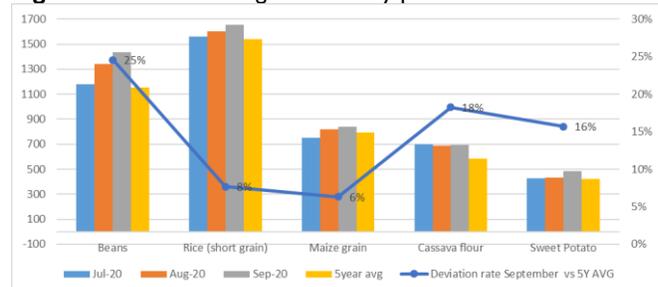
Remittances from the Burundian diaspora, while not a significant portion of GDP or income for most households, continue to decline following the recent contraction of the global economy. Contribution to GDP was estimated at one percent in 2019 and is likely to have fallen to near zero after remittances decreased 20 to 30 percent during the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank). This will impact the incomes of poor households who depended on remittances and limit their purchasing power for as long as the COVID-19 pandemic lasts.

**Humanitarian assistance**

Humanitarian partners including WFP provided emergency food assistance in populations affected by security and climate shocks and to the targeted communities: returnees, refugees, and IDPs. The standard assistance distributed to all three groups is 360 grams of cereals, 120 grams of legumes, 25 grams of oil and five grams of salt per person, per day, representing a nearly full ration.

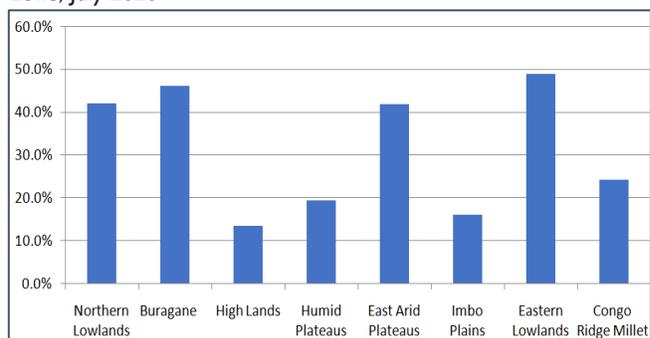
- Since June 2020, nearly 30,000 returnees have arrived in the country and have been assisted with a return package for three months.
- 50,000 refugees hosted in five refugee camps are benefiting from a monthly ration. The WFP food basket is the main source of food and income for most refugees. For food items not provided in the food aid food basket, such as complimentary foods for children under two years old, refugees depend on purchases in the market.
- Nearly 150,000 victims of the climatic hazards of March-April in Imbo Plains, and all other acutely food insecure communities are being assisted through December with by WFP with a monthly food basket.

**Figure 1. National average commodity prices**



Source: WFP/mVAM

**Figure 2. Household income from agriculture labor by livelihood zone, July 2020**



Source: WFP

**Security**

Despite localized security incidents between armed groups and the National Defense Force in August and September in the western part of the country bordering the Kibira nature reserve and along the DRC border, reporting indicates that these incidents have ceased, and that food and income sources are no longer affected in October.

**Current food security and nutrition outcomes**

With favorable 2020 Season B crop production, food consumption outcomes improved in July 2020. Data from the July 2020 WFP/FSMS food security assessment indicated that food consumption score (FCS) was acceptable for 84.1 percent of households in July, while the Hunger Household Score (HHS) was favorable for 83.1 (HHS=0) at the national level. Food consumption outcomes were however stressed in Eastern Lowlands and Imbo Plains livelihoods where FCS was acceptable for 68 percent and 75.1 percent respectively. The Hunger Household Score (HHS) was favorable only for 75.3 percent and 69.8 respectively. The WFP/FSMS assessment also indicated that 34 percent of households were practicing stressed livelihood strategies, while 16.3 developed crisis livelihood strategies. The above food security outcomes were collected during the harvest period and are expected to deteriorate during the lean period of October to January 2021.

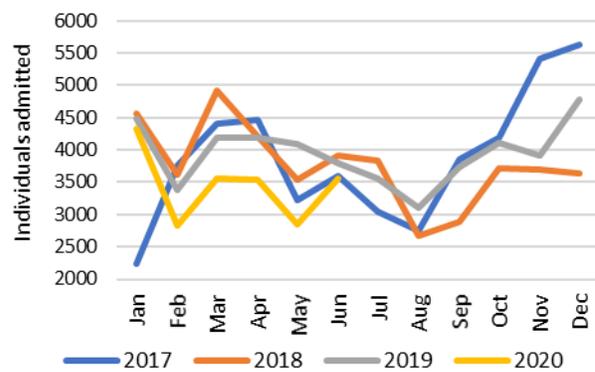
As for the state of nutrition, corresponding with the seasonal lean period, relatively higher levels of acute malnutrition are typically observed between October and December. Despite this, according to the National Nutritional Survey, which used SMART methodology, the national malnutrition prevalence remained between Acceptable (Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) <5 percent) and Alert (GAM 5-9.9 percent). The reported number of children admitted for acute malnutrition between January and June 2020 (Figure 3) show normal seasonal trends, but the total numbers are lower than that reported in the same period since 2017 reflecting a relatively better nutrition situation in 2020.

**Assumptions**

Between October 2020 and May 2021, the projected food security outcomes are based on the following national-level assumptions:

- According to NOAA, USGS, and ICPAC seasonal forecasts for October to December, a near-average rainfall (90-110 percent) performance is expected nationally, with localized areas of slightly below-average rainfall (76-90 percent). While Burundi receives an average of around 500 mm during the short rains, the slightly below-average forecasted rainfall is still expected to be sufficient for maize, beans, and pasture production, generally, but will likely negatively affect bean and maize production in lowland areas like Northern Lowlands, Eastern Dry Plateaus, and Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones. Below-average rainfall is also forecasted during March to May 2021 but soil humidity from near-average rainfall of November to January should reduce the negative impact.

**Figure 3.** Admission data, January 2017-June 2020



Source: Ministry of Health

- **Season 2020 C production:** Normal crop production is anticipated for the 2020 Season C, practiced almost exclusively in the marshlands. High rainfall between February to April 2020, 150 mm above average, created favorable soil humidity in the marshlands for normal growth and maturation of plants. Crop production of Season C represents around 15 percent of the annual crop production and supplies food between October to December for nearly 60 percent of rural households.
- **Season 2021 A production:** From September to February, rainfall is expected to be normal in high altitude areas but delayed in low altitude areas by more than one month, delaying the cultivation of crops for the 2021 Season A, which typically starts in mid-September and consequently delaying the harvest until March in low altitude areas. Additionally, despite generally average forecasted national rainfall, below-average rainfall is forecasted between September to December 2020 in low altitude areas of Northern Lowlands, East Arid Plateaus, and Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones, which will heavily affect bean crops as they are less tolerant to water deficit. Under similar rainfall conditions as 2021 Season A, 2017 Season A crop production covered 75 percent of population food needs from January to March. In an average year, Season A production covers around 85 percent of food needs over the same period. The expected deficit will likely be covered by food imports and wild foods.
- **Season 2021 B planting:** Delayed planting of Season A crops, nationally, will lead to a reduction in access to inputs and cultivatable land for the implementation of 2021 Season B in February and March. Season A crops will still be growing in fields during the typical Season B planting period. Season B bean seeds will also be unavailable as they typically come from season A crops.
- The upward trend in staple foods prices is expected to continue from October until February with the peak expected in January 2021. Throughout the projection period, maize and bean prices are expected to remain roughly 20 percent above the five-year average and last year prices. While demand may increase due to the expected decrease of Season A crop production, with informal imports from Tanzania restricted due to the border closure, supply is expected to remain 10 to 15 percent below average, driving up pressure on prices. With inflation currently at 6.6 percent, food imports are expected to remain lower than normal due to expected decreased regional crop production caused by below-average rainfall in neighboring countries. There will likely be some illegal export of food to Tanzania through February 2021, despite restrictive measures.
- The refugee population hosted in camps is expected to remain stable, around 50,000 people, due to border closures. This population will likely continue to receive in-kind food assistance through the outlook period. Returnees are expected throughout the outlook period, with an estimated 6,000 individuals arriving per month. All returnees will likely continue to receive in-kind and cash-based transfers throughout the outlook period. While floods of the previous rainy period had resulted, in part, in the displacement of nearly 50,000 people in April 2020, average to below-average rainfall expected in the Imbo Plains livelihood zone throughout the scenario period, could lead to a decrease in the number of IDPs by 20 to 30 percent, in April 2021, compared to the last year.
- As positive cases of COVID-19 in Burundi continue to be imported from neighboring countries, it is currently expected that the borders will remain closed through December, likely opening at the beginning of January. Border closures will

continue to impact livelihoods, market supplies, as well as income opportunities. Until December, given movement restrictions, income opportunities will decrease by 20 to 40 percent compared to normal for poor and very poor households of the Imbo Plains and the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones, the areas most affected by the border closure. These households will practice agricultural labor in Burundi and earn lower wages than they would have earned in Tanzania. In the same livelihood zones, the reduction in purchasing power will negatively affect households' ability to purchase seeds and fertilizers, which will have a significant impact on poor households' Season 2021 A production.

- Due to COVID-19 movement restrictions, remittances from DRC, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa are estimated to reduce 30 to 50 percent from typical levels until December as money is typically sent in-person by crossing the border. The depreciation of the BIF is discouraging many from sending money through electronic services and preferring instead to wait to send with travellers. From January 2021, based on the assumption that borders will reopen until the end of the projection period, remittances will increase from their current level, but remain 15 to 20 percent below average, as some Burundians will remain hesitant to cross borders considering lack of certainty about income earning opportunities in neighboring countries, possibly high travel fees, as well as the fact that they will have to pass through health screening check points.
- Agricultural labor wages are expected to remain stable at BIF 2,000 to 3,000 per person per day from October to December 2020 due to weak employment opportunities. From January 2021 to the end of the forecast period, access to labor opportunities is likely to increase with the expected reopening of the Tanzanian border, as people migrate for labor opportunities. Domestic workers could demand increased wages given the devaluation of the BIF and the rise in the prices of goods and services. Therefore, a 20 to 30 percent increase in labor wages is expected
- Inflation of locally produced and imported foodstuffs is expected to persist, increasing between five and 10 percent throughout the projection period. The increase in food prices will be driven by the anticipated below-average crop production of Season A and Season B, especially in the surplus-producing livelihood zones of Eastern and Northern Lowlands, as well as the decrease of formal and informal food imports. The decreased value of BIF vis à vis the Tanzanian Shilling (TSH) is likely to encourage Burundians to sell food in Tanzania, despite regulations banning it.

### ***Most Likely Food Security Outcomes***

Between October 2020 and January 2021, most areas of Burundi are anticipated to experience Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes, supported by near-normal access to typical sources of food and income. The exceptions are the Eastern Lowlands and Imbo Plains livelihood zones, which are expected to face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes throughout the projected period.

Food access is stable among poor households that grow cash crops and staple food crops, representing approximately 60 percent of the total population. These households are able to earn income to purchase food at markets and to support access to agricultural inputs for the 2020/21 Season A implementation in September/October. Poor and very poor households may exhaust their own production earlier in the lean period, in September and/or October, but will be able to access income from agriculture labor for 2021 Season A plowing activities in September and October, but also from other labor opportunities available during the period like construction and cash crop activities (weeding, harvesting, selling). Most households, therefore, are experiencing None (IPC Phase 1) food security outcomes.

Poor and very poor households located near borders in the Imbo Plains and Eastern Lowlands typically depend on labor opportunities in DRC and Tanzania, respectively. In fact, around 25 percent of the population in Eastern Lowlands earns income from crossing the border into Tanzania while 16 percent of the population in Imbo Plains earns income from labor opportunities in DRC and 30 percent earn income from petty trade along the border. These income earning opportunities have been effectively banned since the border closure went into effect in March 2020. In addition to the border closure, forecasted below-average rainfall and a delayed start to the short rains is delaying the implementation of Season A and negatively affecting poor and very poor households who depend on agriculture labor as a main income source. Furthermore, the current lean period will be longer than normal in the middle and low altitude areas, with a one-month delay in sowing for the 2021 Season A and consequently a delay in the maturation and harvest of crops in those areas.

Poor and very poor households typically depend on food purchases during the October-December lean period. Staple food prices are expected to remain above average throughout the outlook period for most staple foods, reducing purchasing power of households who are already facing reduced incomes and leading to area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes with some households likely to experience Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.

With humanitarian assistance expected to continue at historical levels, most IDPs, returnees, and refugees will likely experience None! (IPC Phase 1!) food security outcomes throughout the outlook period.

Based on past nutrition data, acute malnutrition rates in Burundi range between Acceptable (Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) by weight-for-height z-score (WHZ) <5 percent) to Alert (GAM (WHZ) 5-9.9 percent). Data on the admission of children with acute malnutrition for January to June 2020 show normal seasonal trends, but the total numbers are lower than that reported in the same period since 2017 reflecting a relatively better nutrition situation in 2020. Food access will likely decrease during the lean period of October 2020 to January 2021 contributing to increased acute malnutrition. During this period, more provinces are likely to have an Alert (GAM (WHZ) 5-9.9 percent) level of acute malnutrition. However, nutrition outcomes are expected to progressively improve to Acceptable (<5 percent) level from February 2021 in many provinces with increased food access after the Season A crop harvest.

### Events that Might Change the Outlook

Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most-likely scenario.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
National	Heavy rainfall during Season 2021 A and Season 2021 B (November to May 2021)	Although below-average to average rainfall is forecasted, heavy rainfall could occur in localized areas, resulting in flooding in lowlands and along rivers. The impact on assets, crops, and food security will be worse than at the end of 2019 and the first semester of 2020. Soil water level is already high due to heavy rainfall and flooding from the end of 2019 through April 2020. Thus, additional rain will quickly surpass the water retention capacity of soils. This will happen while the aftermath of the floods on crop destruction and food security remains, especially in many localities of Imbo Plains livelihood zone. Especially in this livelihood zone, crops of 2021 Season A will be destroyed and lead to increased food insecurity with Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes likely. However, above-average rainfall would benefit like Eastern Lowlands, Northern Lowlands, Eastern Arid Plateaus and Buragane livelihood zones where 2021 Season A sowing has been delayed one month due to late rainfall.
Northern and Eastern Lowlands livelihood zones	Large repatriation following peaceful post-election period	With increased security and socio-economic improvement following the peaceful transition to the new government, an increased flow of repatriation will be expected. Until June, Burundi welcomed returnees from Tanzania with an estimated monthly average of 2,500 returnees. Since September, the average of assisted returnees has almost doubled as the Burundian government, in collaboration with that of Rwanda and the UNHCR, have initiated the process of repatriating Burundian refugees in Rwanda. This sharp increase in returnees would increase the pressure on food resources in areas along the border from November to May. Thus, Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) among returnees would be expected and, in that case, increased logistics and humanitarian capacity support will be needed beginning in November. Food and non-food (seeds, shelter) humanitarian assistance will be required for this group until May 2021 because for those who returned between October 2020 to January, the soonest they could harvest would be June 2021.
National	Movement limitation related to COVID-19 extends past the end of 2020	If the border closures remain in place past January 2021, poor and very poor households in border areas including the Imbo Plains, Eastern Lowlands, and Burgane livelihood zones, who depend on labor and petty trade as a main income sources, and who are already projected to face food insecurity during the current lean period of October 2020 to January 2021, could lead these populations to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security outcomes through the outlook period.
National	Fall Army Worm	The Fall Army Worm (FAW) attacked Burundi in 2016 and thrives at times of rainfall deficit. An <a href="#">FAO study</a> on the impact of FAW on 2018 A crop production estimated at 20 percent of maize plants were infected and resulted in a seven percent decrease from the expected harvest, equivalent to 10,000 tons or three million USD. With below-average rainfall expected from November 2020 to February 2021, FAW could damage maize crops on 2021 Season A and 2021 Season B and could drive Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes for poor and very poor households cultivating maize in the Imbo Plains, Eastern Lowlands and Northern Lowlands livelihood zones.

**AREAS OF CONCERN**

**Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone**

**Current Situation**

The area of concern is situated along Burundi’s eastern border with Tanzania and has an estimated population of 741,313. The area includes Cankuzo province (Mishiha, Gisagara and Cendajuru communes), Ruyigi province (Gusuru, Kinyinya and Nyabitsinda communes), Rutana province (Giharo and Bukemba communes). The scenario analysis focuses on poor and very poor households, a population of about 185,000, who have been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions on borders as well as a delayed and expected below-average rainfall affecting 2021 Season A. The main income source for these households is agriculture daily labor and most of them depend on labor opportunities in Tanzania.

October coincides with the start of the short rainfall period through February. There is already a delay of nearly five weeks and rains are characterized by deficit rainfall volumes deviating from the normal. The late rainfall is expected to delay sowing, extend the lean season, and further contribute to below-average income sources for poor households which are expected, in turn, to turn to consuming seeds, making them less available for the implementation of 2021 Season A. Similar rainfall conditions were observed in 2017 Season A when more than 45 percent of planted areas in the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone were seeded one month late compared to a national average of 27 percent.

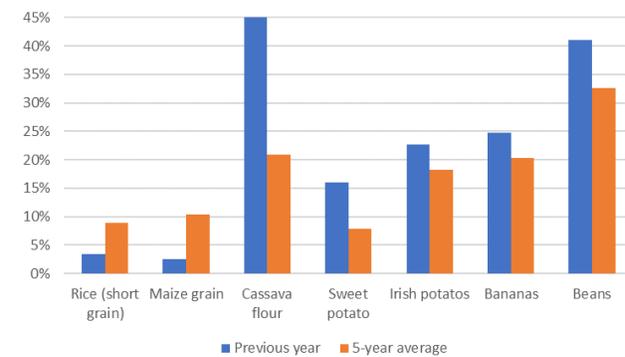
The lean period is characterized by staple food price increases. Due to the low seasonal production since August 2020, food prices have risen nationally compared to the five-year average but also compared to last year’s prices. The average price of beans, cassava flour, and maize are notably higher in September 2020 than the five year average, 33, 22, and 18 percent respectively (Figure 5). Maize prices are currently showing an upward trend in markets. Compared to the previous year, staple food prices increased by almost 40 and 33 percent compared to the five-year average for beans and maize, respectively. Currently, maize stocks are very low, local production in the livelihood zone has been already exhausted. Thus, whereas during the last harvest period, January to February, the seasonal production from the Eastern Lowlands supplied the urban markets, contributing to security stocks, during this lean period, the stocks of the urban markets will supply the rural markets in the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone.

**Figure 4. Area of concern**



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 5. Staple food price deviation in Eastern Lowlands**



Source: WFP m/VAM

While the Eastern Lowlands is supplied by Tanzanian imports in normal years, it’s less attractive for traders export to Burundi given the depreciation of the BIF vis à vis the Tanzanian shilling (TSH). In addition, while formal Tanzanian imports are reduced, markets are typically supplied by informal imports from Tanzania. Informal imports by small traders are also below average given the border closure, banning the movement of people and therefore the movement of petty traders, as a COVID-19 control measurement.

Compared to the rest of the country, households in the Eastern Lowlands have less diverse income sources; they are less involved in cash crop cultivation and have below-average livestock holdings, except for poultry. Only 33 percent of the livelihood zone is involved in cash crop production, largely better off households, mainly composed of non-advanced palm oil production, compared to a national average of 58 percent of the population involved in coffee, palm oil, cotton, and tea production. The Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone has seen a high concentration of returnees and in recent months. Nearly 20,000 returnees have arrived and have been assisted with three months of food and cash rations. However, nearly 10,000 returnees will still have food assistance in their stock while the other 10,000 will have exhausted their assistance in December,

as they arrived after the implementation of the 2020 Season B. From October to December, they will remain without humanitarian assistance. WFP humanitarian assistance is provided to the 25,000 non-displaced populations who are food insecure to cover the period from October to December.

In the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone, with a typical season expected, food access is likely to decrease during the lean period of October 2020 to January 2021 contributing to deterioration of acute malnutrition. During this period, the area is likely to have an Alert (GAM 5-9.9%) level of acute malnutrition. However, nutrition outcomes are expected to progressively improve to Acceptable (<5%) level from February 2021 in the livelihood zone with increased food access after 2021 Season A crop harvest from February to April.

### Assumptions

#### Rainfall:

National production is expected to be average, despite some irregular rainfall at the beginning of the season. There is an increased likelihood for slightly below-average rainfall (76-90 percent) in the Eastern Lowlands where the start of the short rains has been erratic and below-average. During the period of below average rainfall, the [area of concern will be the most affected](#) as it's located at the low altitude (with around 1400mm of annual precipitation compared to the national average of 1700mm). Rainfall forecasts from NOAA and USGS, confirmed by [ICPAC seasonal forecasts](#), indicate that below-average rainfall is expected between October and December 2020 and between March and May 2021. The expected below-average and late rainfall from October to December 2020, is mostly affecting the area of concern affecting the seeding and growth period of 2021 Season A crops. Below-average rainfall from March to May will reduce crop production of 2021 Season B.

#### Agriculture:

- **2021 season A production:** The late start of the short rains delayed the implementation of 2021 Season A by one month. Consequently, the harvest, which normally occurs in February, will be delayed by one month, thereby extending the lean season through March 2021. Additionally, below-average rainfall forecasted between October to December 2020, will negatively affect 2021 Season A crop production. Below-average rainfall in the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone will affect beans crops the most as they are less tolerant to water deficits. Under similar rainfall conditions, [2017 season A maize crop production decreased around 25 percent and bean production decreased near 30 percent compared to 2016 Season A](#).
- **2021 season B planting:** Delayed implementation of 2021 Season A will lead to a stressed implementation of 2021 Season B in February and March 2021. Season A crops will still be growing in fields during the typical Season B planting period. Season B bean seeds will also be unavailable as they typically come from season A crops.

**Humanitarian assistance:** WFP, in collaboration with its implementing partners, are likely to provide emergency food assistance to nearly 300,000 beneficiaries nationally, including 25,000 the population of concern, with nearly 573.75 metric tons of in-kind assistance and approximately USD one million in cash vouchers to local populations targeted in food insecure communities until December. From February to May 2021, while the population in need of humanitarian assistance could increase, the rise in prices following the La Niña in the region could reduce available financial resources and moreover reduce the number of beneficiaries to be reached or the distributed ration size. This will impact food consumption especially during the lean season from April to May.

#### COVID-19 Restrictions

Border closures will continue to impact livelihoods, market supplies, and income resources of poor and very poor households in the Eastern Lowlands. While food availability in the area is provided by imports from Tanzania during the lean period, the limitation of the movement of people reduces food trade flows across borders. The restrictions of population movement will also prevent 25 percent of the households in the area, mainly composed by poor and very poor, to access to their typical labor activities in Tanzania. The resulting reduction in purchasing power will affect food access from market during the lean period of October to December and the ability to purchase seeds and fertilizer which will have a significant impact on the production of the 2021 Season A.

#### Income

During the October 2020 to January 2021 scenario period, poor and very poor households who used to earn income from labor activities in Tanzania (around 25 percent of the total population of the area) will continue to be affected by the COVID-19 border closure. Households will have to resort to agriculture labor and firewood and charcoal collection and will earn less income. The delay of rainfall for 2021 Season A implementation will continue to further decrease agriculture opportunities in the area. According to key informants, income losses are estimated to be between 30 and 50 percent compared to a typical year. With borders expected to re-open by the beginning of January 2021, a slow increase in access to cross-border labor

activity is expected in February to May 2021 scenario period but will be a timid recovery as people will want to confirm income opportunities, travel fees, and health screening check points before crossing the border. This will allow for a slight improvement of income for those population of concern.

**Remittances**

Through December 2020, the border closure to the movement of people will continue to drastically affect remittances, typically sent in-person by crossing the border as electronic rates are poor given the depreciation of BIF. Remittances are expected to slowly improve from January 2021. If the border re-opens by January 2021 to the movement of people, income earning opportunities could increase by 20 to 30 percent but during the assumption period, remittances are expected to remain 15 percent below average due to a slow resumption of normal cross-border activities, per key informants.

**Labor opportunities and wage rates**

Agricultural labor wages are expected to remain stable at 2,500 BIF per person per day from October to December 2020 due to weak employment opportunities. From January 2021, when borders are expected to reopen, to the end of the forecast period, income earning opportunities in Tanzania will increase but remain below average. It is also expected that households which typically depend on cross-border income sources will be hesitant to re-engage given their uncertainty about prospects and costs of crossing the border.

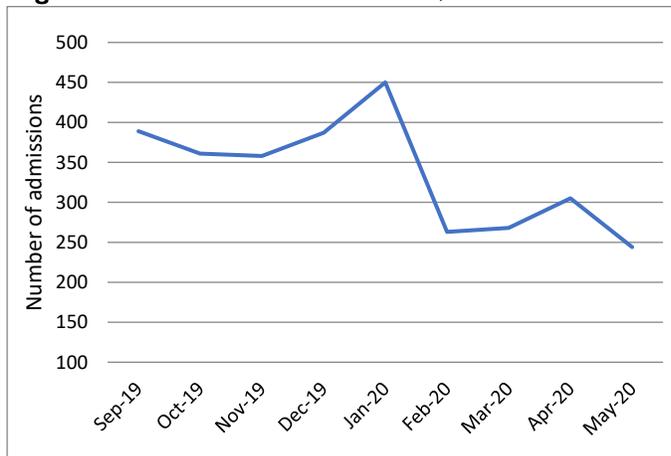
**Macroeconomy**

Inflation in the prices of locally produced or imported foodstuffs is expected to persist, increasing between five and 10 percent throughout the projection period. Food price increases are expected due to below-average food availability anticipated during the projected period due to below-average crop production of 2021 Season A and 2021 Season B in the Eastern and Northern Lowlands livelihood zones, together with the decrease of formal and informal food imports. The depreciation of BIF and border limitations due to COVID-19 significantly constrain food imports between Tanzania and Burundi and between DRC and Burundi.

**Nutrition**

Based on a 2019 SMART survey, the level of acute malnutrition in the area is 5.9 percent, ranged between Acceptable GAM (<5 percent) to Alert (GAM 5-9.9 percent). Data on admission of children with acute malnutrition for January to June 2020 shows normal seasonal trends, but the total numbers are lower than that reported in the same period since 2017 reflecting a relatively better nutrition situation in 2020, which can be inferred to the area of concern with the same proportion (Figure 6). In the Eastern Lowlands, normally food access is likely to decrease during the lean period of October 2020 to January 2021, contributing to deterioration of acute malnutrition. During this period, the area is likely to have an Alert (GAM 5-9.9 percent) level of acute malnutrition. However, nutrition outcomes are expected to progressively improve to Acceptable (<5 percent) level from February 2021 in the livelihood zone with increased food access after the 2021 Season A crop harvest, from February to April.

**Figure 6. Malnutrition admission trend, Eastern Lowlands**



Source: Ministry of Health

**Staple food prices:**

Bean and maize prices will seasonally increase from October 2020 until January 2021, the lean period, with the peak expected in December and January. Prices will then decrease until February with the Season A harvest. Maize prices will seasonally increase from February to April and bean prices will decrease in March. Throughout the projection period, maize and bean prices will remain around 20 percent above the five-year average and the previous year (Figure 7-8). While demand may increase due to the expected decrease of 2021 Season A crop production, supply is expected to be 10 to 20 percent below average. This dynamic will place upward pressure on prices. With gradual inflation currently at 6.6 percent, food imports should remain lower due to an expected decrease of regional crop production caused by below-average rainfall. This could result in increased unofficial export of food to Tanzania through February 2021 despite restrictive measures, further restricting supply.

**Humanitarian assistance**

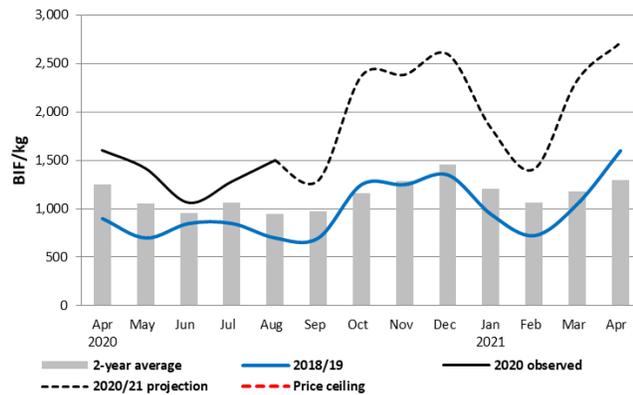
WFP will assist around 25,000 beneficiaries facing acute food insecurity in Ruyigi province for three months October, November, and December. Each beneficiary will receive 360 g of maize, 120 of bean, 25g of oil, five grams of salt, all per person and per day for 15 days per month.

**Most Likely Food Security Outcomes**

Between October 2020 and January 2021, households will largely depend on market purchases to access food, as this period coincides with the lean period. Food consumption gaps are likely among poor households, driven by a lack of carryover stocks and below-normal localized production of 2020 Season B, below-average 2021 Season B labor opportunities, and above-average prices. Despite these conditions, poor households will be able to reach a minimum consumption, but unable to access to non-food items without engaging in coping strategies. Nutrition indicators during this time are expected to decline compared to previous months but likely be above average, therefore households are expected to experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes, with some rural, single-parent households experiencing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.

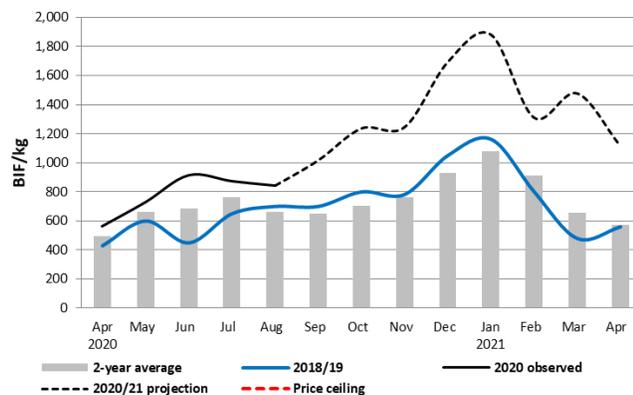
Poor and very poor households are expected to slightly improve their food consumption in March 2021 from 2021 Season A harvests and expected improvement of cross-border income resources if borders re-open by January 2021. Most poor households will remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2), while some will improve their food access and be in acceptable food security (IPC Phase 1). In January and February 2021, households will prepare and plant for the 2021 Season B. The slight improvement of food access from 2021 Season A crop harvest and improvement of income opportunities access provided by the re-opening of borders and labor opportunities will allow for the implementation of 2021 Season B between February and March 2021. Most poor households will have acceptable to borderline food consumption and will be unable to purchase certain non-essential items. Acute malnutrition is expected to seasonally decrease between February and March 2021 corresponding with the harvest and post-harvest period of 2021 Season A, followed by a slight increase in the short lean period of April.

**Figure 7. Price projection for beans, Kinyinya market**



Source: WFP m/IVAM

**Figure 8. Price projection for maize, Kinyinya market**



Source: WFP m/IVAM

**Events that Might Change the Outlook**

Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most-likely scenario, additional to events identified for this area of concern and others.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Area of concern	Large repatriation following peaceful post-election period	Among the 410,000 Burundian refugees in neighboring countries, 54 percent are hosted in Tanzanian refugee camps. Most of those refugees in Tanzania are from Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone. If large number return following border re-opening in January, Eastern Lowlands could see a pressure on food resources from January to May. After exhausting the return humanitarian package of three months and unable to sow 2021 Season A, this population will increase in stressed (IPC Phase 2) and crisis (IPC phase 3) outcomes.
Area of concern	Maintaining COVID-19 Restrictions through March 2021	If the border closures remain in place through March 2021, poor and very poor households of the area of concern will be affected in three main ways: loss of cross-border labor opportunities as income resources, but also decrease of agriculture cultivating areas. Normally, when people engage in agriculture labor in Tanzania, they work for one part of the day and, for the rest of the day, they cultivate rented plots for their personal harvests. The loss of this opportunity is affected family income resources, but also affects food access from crop production. The borders remain closed through March 2021, poor and very poor households will keep continue to not have access to typical income and food sources and an increased number of households will experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC phase 3) food insecurity during the lean period of April 2021.

#### ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to arrive at a most likely scenario for the coming eight months. [Learn more here.](#)