



# GIEWS Country Brief

## The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Reference Date: 21-September-2020

### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Crop production expected below average in 2020 due to floods, pests, conflict and COVID-19 prevention measures
- Food prices increased sharply between April and July 2020
- About 21.8 million people estimated severely food insecure until end of year

### Crop production expected below-average in 2020 due to floods, pests, conflict and COVID-19 prevention measures

In northern Equatorial and Oriental provinces, harvesting of the 2020 main maize crop is expected to begin in October. Production prospects are favourable as overall adequate and well-distributed precipitation during the season resulted in generally good crop conditions.

In central provinces, planting of the 2020 main season maize crops started in July under favourable weather conditions, except in the eastern parts, where heavy rains in mid-April and mid-September caused localized flooding, disrupting land preparation and planting activities. Floods affected particularly Uvira and Fizi territories (South Kivu Province), but also Kalemie territory (Tanganika Province) and Djugu and Mahagi territories (Ituri Province). In addition, an escalation of violence in eastern provinces since June 2020 resulted in the displacement of about 367 000 people, hampering agricultural operations. Activities were disrupted particularly in some areas such as Djugu, Irumu, Mambassa and Mahagi territories (Ituri Province), Beni territory (North Kivu Province) and Nyunzu territory (Kalemie Province), resulting in localized reduced crop production.

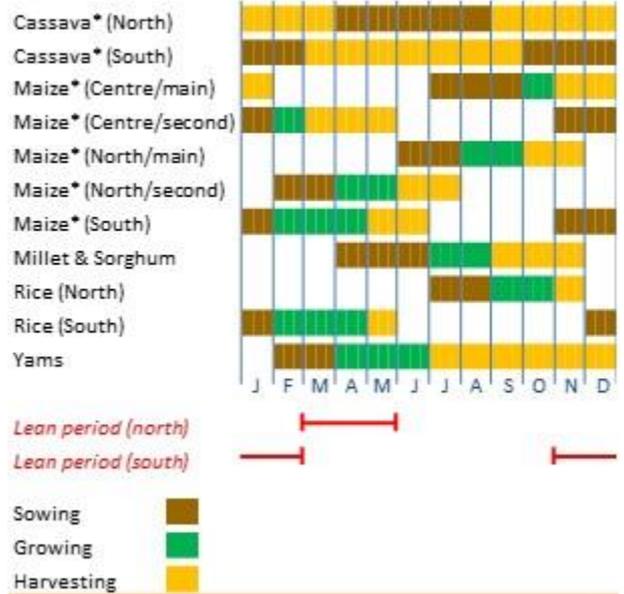
In the southernmost uni-modal rainfall areas, harvesting of the 2020 maize crops finalized in June and the output is estimated at below-average levels, mainly due to Fall Armyworm infestations.

Persisting conflicts in eastern areas, population displacements and movement restrictions related to COVID-19 prevention measures continue limiting farmers' access to crop growing areas and agricultural inputs. These factors, coupled with the

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#### Crop Calendar

(\*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

impact of pests and floods on yields, are anticipated to result in a below-average agricultural output in 2020.

## Food prices increased sharply between April and July 2020

Prices of imported food commodities strongly increased between April and July 2020. Reduced cash crop exports, due to low demand by importing countries and the slowdown of trade flows due to COVID-19, resulted in the decrease of foreign exchange earnings, causing the depreciation of the Franc Congolais and triggering the increase in prices. In July, maize prices in Kinshasa were reported to be nearly 80 percent higher than their levels in February 2020.

## About 21.8 million people estimated severely food insecure until end of year

The ongoing conflict continues to be the major cause of food insecurity. It resulted in massive population displacements, particularly in eastern and southern areas, leading to widespread disruption of agricultural and marketing activities, with a severe negative impact on food availability and access. In addition, despite the end of the state of emergency on 22 July and the easing of some COVID-19 restrictive measures, the limitation of people movements in the country continues to have adverse effects on households' livelihoods. The pandemic also had a severe impact on the economy and, in particular, on the informal sector, which employs more than 70 percent of the households. The loss of income for informal workers, the unavailability of sufficient Government social protection measures and the high level of prices drastically reduced households' access to food in the third quarter of 2020.

According to the latest IPC analysis carried out in July 2020, about 21.8 million people (over 30 percent of the analyzed population), are estimated to be severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 or above) during the July-December 2020 period. This figure is 60 percent above the figure projected in June 2019, which obviously did not consider the COVID-19 pandemic. The largest number of severely food insecure people is located in areas with a high concentration of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees, including the eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu.

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## Democratic Republic of the Congo - Integrated food security Phase Classification (IPC)

July-December 2020

