

Famine Early Warning Systems Network

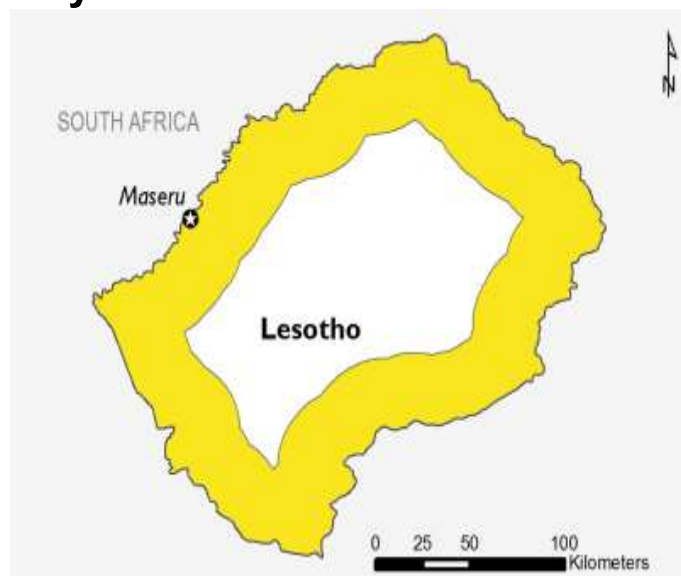
Southern Africa

Lesotho

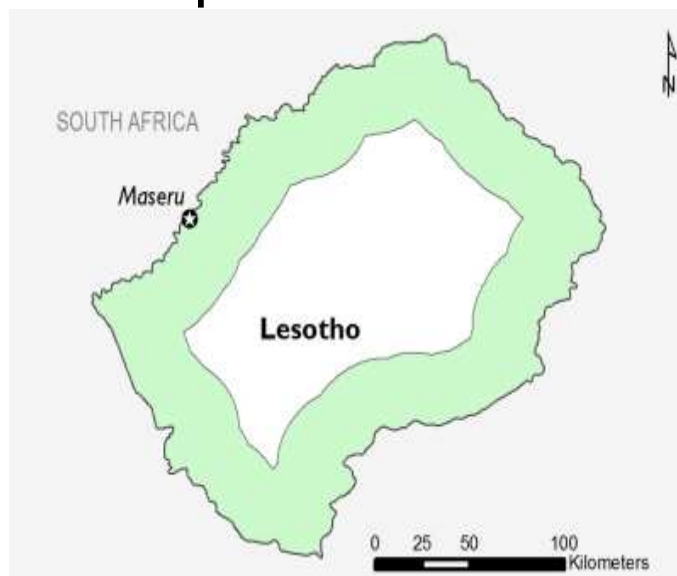
Key Message Update

Access to the dry harvest improves food security outcomes

May 2021



June - September 2021



IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3+: Crisis or higher

Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance

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.

FEWS NET Remote Monitoring countries use a colored outline to represent the highest IPC classification in areas of concern.

May 2021

Key Messages:

Food security outcomes are improving in Lesotho as households access the dry harvest, primarily maize and sorghum, marking the end of the lean season. Household dietary diversity is also improving with access to beans, sweet potatoes, and some vegetables. However, area-level

Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are likely still present as household income remains below-average, limiting the purchase of non-food needs. However, food security outcomes are expected to improve to Minimal (IPC Phase 1) between June and August as the main harvest continues and households increase income from crop sales and off-season activities. In September, area-level Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are likely to return as very poor households deplete their food stocks from harvested crops.

Household income from crop sales is expected to peak between June and August as households sell some of their harvests. During this period, households are expected to access income from off-farm labor and self-employment, and after the winter, vegetable sales will likely peak. Typical livestock sales will also contribute to household incomes, although very poor and poor households are likely to refrain from selling to recover herd sizes. Key informants indicate that some very poor households have sold all non-essential animals over the past year. However, improved incomes through August will improve very poor and poor household purchasing power, increasing access to other basic food and non-food items. The ongoing harvests in Lesotho and the anticipated good harvest in South Africa are also expected to maintain stable maize meal prices through the scenario period.

As of May 27, Lesotho has confirmed 10,822 COVID-19 cases, with a seven-day rolling average of around two daily positive COVID-19 cases. A 10 pm-4 am national curfew remains in place; however, businesses are operating at near-normal levels, and most urban households have resumed their economic activities, improving food and income access. The Lesotho-South Africa borders are open on both sides, allowing migrants to travel to South Africa for job opportunities. However, the need for proof of a negative COVID-19 test is limiting access for most poor households as many cannot afford the test.

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<https://fews.net/southern-africa/lesotho/key-message-update/may-2021>

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