FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Sharp cereal production decreases estimated in southern regions in 2016 due to impact of El Niño-induced drought
- National rice production estimated to have increased marginally in 2016 on yearly basis but still remains below average
- Food security conditions critical in southern regions on account of successive years of reduced crop production and higher prices

Rice production in 2016 estimated up from 2015 but still remains below average, while sharp production declines registered in south

The 2015/16 cropping season was largely characterized by a significant decline in crop production in southern parts of the country reflecting severe El Niño-induced drought conditions; the impact was particularly pronounced in the regions of Androy, Anosy and Atsimo Andrefana. In the north, the regions of Sofia and Boeny, as well as the district of Maevatanana in Betsiboka Region, were also adversely affected. The poor seasonal rains resulted in an 81 percent decline in maize production in Androy compared to the already reduced level of 2015, while maize production remained well below average in Anosy.

However, in the major rice-producing areas of the country, particularly in the centre and north, good rainfall was received, while the damage caused by locusts was minimal mostly on account of the impact of the three-year anti-locust response programme (2013-2016) implemented jointly by FAO and the Government of Madagascar. Rice production is, therefore, estimated to have increased by about 2 percent but still remains about 5 percent below the five-year average. The national outputs of maize and cassava, which are mainly produced in southern parts, decreased by 4 percent and 2 percent, respectively, from the below-average 2015 outputs. These results were taken from the joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) report, which was released in October.

National import requirements down slightly

Import requirements in the 2016/17 marketing year (April/March) are estimated at about 272 000 tonnes of rice (milled), 97 000 tonnes of maize and 149 000 tonnes of wheat, a total of about

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice (paddy)</td>
<td>4 052</td>
<td>3 722</td>
<td>3 815</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4 439</td>
<td>4 057</td>
<td>4 137</td>
<td>2</td>
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Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data. Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets
518 000 tonnes of cereals, 6 percent down from the estimated requirements in 2015/16. The small drop this year mostly reflects the higher 2016 rice output, while the depreciation of the national currency (Arriary) has pushed up importation costs and negatively impacted on the country’s import capacity.

The below-average outputs and weaker currency have put upward pressure on food prices, resulting in higher inflation rates in 2016.

**Consecutive seasons of reduced agricultural outputs severely impact food security in south**

According to the results from the CFSAM, out of the nine regions covered by the household food security survey, the majority of the households that are classified as severely food insecurity are located in the three drought-affected southern regions (Androy, Anosy and Atsimo Ampitabe). The CFSAM estimated that over 1.2 million people are food insecure in Madagascar’s three southern regions, of which approximately 617 000 people are categorized as moderately food insecure and almost 600 000 are severely food insecure. Although compared to 2015, an overall reduction in the number of food insecure people was estimated, there was an increase in the estimate of severely food insecure persons.

In southeastern coastal regions, the food insecurity situation is characterized by a high number of households in moderate food insecurity compared to previous years, mainly reflecting the deterioration in purchasing power as a result of higher prices and reduced crop production.

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1 These figures have been updated by an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Mission that visited the country at the end of September. The Mission’s remit was to assess the vulnerability situation in Madagascar’s southern regions. The report can be accessed here.