**Key Messages**

- Due to the failed or significantly below average 2018 harvest Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are present in semiarid areas of southern and central regions. The forecast El Niño and suppressed rainfall, will likely delay the availability of green foods in these areas as more households will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes through January 2019 in these areas. However, in some non-remote central semiarid areas, due to a larger than previously anticipated harvest Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are most likely. Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are present in areas affected by sporadic attacks in Cabo Delgado, where rural households are forced to abandon their homes. The rest of the country is facing Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes.

- In August, maize grain prices increased across all monitored markets, but had larger increases in northern markets. August prices on average were 32 percent above the five-year average and 91 percent above last year’s prices. In northern markets prices increased faster than normal, likely related to increased purchases by the increased number of traders buying grain for mills and export.

- According to the SACORF, average to below-average rainfall is anticipated in southern and central regions primarily due to the forecast weak El Niño during the main rainfall season. In producing areas however, rainfall is expected to be average to above-average favoring crop development especially during the second half of the season. There is a low to moderate risk of flooding, except in northern river basins where there is a high risk of flooding during the second half of the season.

**Current Situation**

*Income sources:* Poor households in remote semiarid areas have exhausted their food stocks earlier than normal and are increasingly engaging in self-employment activities for income, while reducing non-food expenditure. As more households engage in self-employment activities opportunities to sell services and/or products decreases, further limiting incomes. The most vulnerable households, who are unable to engage in self-employment activities as they are unable to access the necessary income to purchase food are reducing the quantity and frequency of meals and withdrawing children from school.

*Seasonal progress:* The July to September second season harvest is limited or non-existent in many remote semiarid areas of southern and central Mozambique due to below-average residual moisture from the main rainfall season. As the next agriculture season approaches, households in some southern areas have started land preparations.
in anticipation of the rains for the first planting. However, second season production only took place in lowland areas where residual moisture was sufficient or irrigation is available. In these areas, households cultivate mostly vegetables, but also some tubers and maize grain.

**Markets and prices:** Maize grain prices generally increased in monitored markets from July to August except in Beira and Maputo markets where prices were relatively stable. In southern and central areas, prices increased more rapidly than the average seasonal rate and northern maize grain prices continued to increase very rapidly. From June to August, maize grain prices increased 138 percent in Cuamba, 96 percent in Nampula (Figure 1), and 75 percent in Pemba. Across the three markets, maize grain prices in August were on average 32 percent above the five-year average and 91 percent above last year’s prices. The price increase in northern markets is potentially due to the increasing number of traders reselling for milling and export. Maize grain prices in major reference markets of central and southern regions are close to the five-year average; however, market prices are well above average in remote semiarid areas. As households in these areas remain market dependent, high staple food prices are affecting purchasing power and lower food access.

**FEWS NET assessment in Gaza Province:** In late July, FEWS NET carried out a rapid food security assessment in Chicualacuala, Chigubo, Mabalane and Massingir Districts in Gaza Province. The assessment found Fall Armyworm (FAW) affected crops planted in March/April after a massive crop failure to earlier planted crops due to dryness. Households in predominantly maize producing areas lost most of their crops and have had no food reserves since March. However, households in largely sorghum and millet producing areas did have a harvest, though total production was below average and household stocks only lasted through August. Throughout these areas, opportunities to sell and/or access goods are scarce due to limited market access and employment opportunities, households are relying on coping strategies including reducing the frequency and quantities of meals, consuming less preferable foods including wild foods such as the locally known as “Macuacua”, “chicutsi”, “tinhlari” and “utchema” and investing all their resources to access market foods.

**FEWS NET assessment in Tete Province:** Late in August, FEWS NET carried out a second rapid food security assessment in the semiarid areas in Mutarara, Doa, and Chifunde Districts of Tete Province. Overall, households have better food security outcomes compared to southern semi-arid areas as they had access to main and second season harvests. However, the situation varies by and within Districts. In Mutarara District food availability improved due to the better than previously anticipated harvests in lowland areas along the Zambezi River. Poor households in remote areas can fill food consumptions gaps with a combination of food stocks and market purchases. However, market purchases started earlier than normal. The supply of staple foods in the local reference markets is average; however, prices are slightly above average and well above prices at the same time last year.

**Outcomes:** Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are present where poor households had no harvest or a significantly below average 2018 harvest in semiarid zones of southern and central Mozambique. In the southern region, crop failure or significantly below-average harvest mostly occurred in semiarid areas of Gaza and Inhambane Provinces. In the central region, the failed or reduced harvest occurred mostly in southern Tete Province. Poor households in these areas have exhausted their food stocks earlier than normal and are relying on market purchases for food. Even with the above average 2017 harvest, household income is well below average as the majority of households have not fully recovered from the 2015/16 severe El Niño drought.

Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are present in parts of Tete, Sofala, Manica, Inhambane, Gaza, and Maputo Province where households have access to own foods for three to six months. Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes emerged in areas affected by sporadic attacks in Cabo Delgado Province, as rural households fled their villages for more secure locations. Government sources indicate many displaced households returned to their villages as the government in coordination with WFP, provides humanitarian assistance to returnees. However, recently more attacks have occurred potentially increasing displacement, if more households cannot access food and engage in farming activities food security outcomes may deteriorate. In the rest of the country, most poor rural households are experiencing Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity as access to multiple food sources continues.
UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The assumptions used to develop FEWS NET’s most likely scenario for the June 2018 to January 2019 Food Security Outlook, remain unchanged besides the following:

- **Rainfall:** According to the SARCOF, average to below average rainfall for southern and most central areas is forecast and an increased likelihood of average to above average rainfall in northern and central areas, however there is uncertainty in this projection given the current weak El Niño forecast.

- **Flooding:** Low to moderate risk of flooding during the entire rainfall season except for the high risk of flooding in Megaruma and Messalo river basins in the north, during the second half of the season.

- **Cyclones:** Between December 2018 and March 2019 there is an increased likelihood of a near average number of cyclone strikes due to the forecast weak El Niño.

- **Season progress:** Cumulative rainfall will allow for favorable crop growth and pasture generation, with the largest rainfall totals during the second half of the season in central and northern areas except in central and southern Tete Province.

- **Market prices:** Maize grain prices will remain significantly above-average in northern and some southern and central areas as the lean season begins.

- **Humanitarian assistance:** WFP continues to provide food assistance through March 2019 based on current plans and available resources to nearly 135,000 people with the largest distributions in central areas. In Cabo Delgado the food assistance will target mostly returnees and per current planning will last until November. The food assistance is insufficient to meet the total needs and change the area classification.

MOST LIKELY PROJECTED OUTCOMES THROUGH MARCH 2019

**Projected outcomes through January 2019**

Food security is expected to deteriorate seasonally with the lean season, however this year seasonal effects will be more severe than normal, especially in semiarid areas of southern and central regions, due to early exhaustion of food stocks at the household level, decreased purchasing power, and heavily reliance on market purchases for food. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes will therefore persist in semiarid areas of the central and southern regions. Adjacent districts (far southern areas of Gaza, parts of Inhambane, northeastern and central Maputo, north-central Tete Province, and northern and southern areas of both Sofala and Manica provinces), with better access to markets and income-generating activities, longer access to own foods, and some conditions for second season production are expected to continue experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes. Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes will continue in Cabo Delgado, although if attacks continue and drive further displacement Crisis (IPC phase 3) outcomes will emerge. Overall, the planned and funded food assistance is well below the level of needed assistance and is insufficient to change the area classification. The rest of the country is expected to remain in Minimal (IPC Phase 1).

**Projected outcomes through end of the next lean season (March 2019)**

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) are expected to persist in semiarid areas, with more households facing similar outcomes in February and possibly in March as availability of green foods will likely be delayed due to late planting. Poor households will continue to intensify and expand self-employment and other coping strategies but still have poor purchasing power. Agriculture labor including planting and weeding opportunities will become available during this period for poor households, but most payments will start after the harvest. Overall, even with adopting coping strategies, food gaps will continue in the semiarid areas of the southern and central regions. Access to food from markets will be even more difficult with little to no income and higher staple food prices, negatively affecting purchasing power. Consumption of wild foods will increase, especially with the delay of green food availability, typically available in March. During a typical lean season, poor households are able to meet their basic food needs through a combination of self-employment activities and coping strategies however, during this lean season, poor households will continue facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity outcomes and additional districts including Chemba, Machanga and Maringue in Sofala Province may face similar outcomes. Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes, specifically in Cabo Delgado, and Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes will continue in the rest of the country.

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates the FEWS NET’s Food Security Outlook, which is published three times per year. Learn more about our work [here](#).