

Conflict in Cabo Delgado continues to displace households and disrupt livelihoods

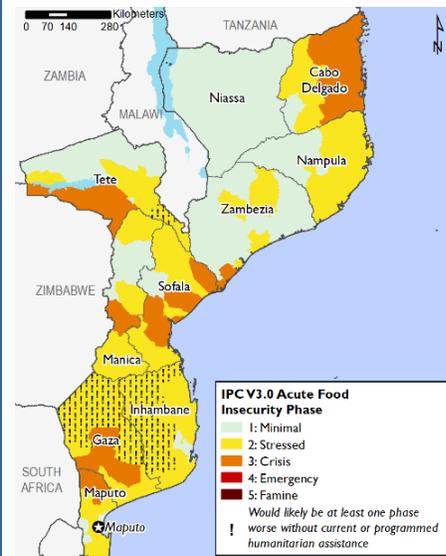
KEY MESSAGES

- The start of the main annual harvest is gradually improving food access for most households in the semi-arid areas of southern and central Mozambique, driving Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes. In the central zone, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes will likely persist at least through May, as households recover from past cyclone damage. However, a June harvest following post-flood planting is expected to drive Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes. In Eastern Nampula, cumulatively below-average rainfall through the rainy season is driving Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes. In Cabo Delgado, the conflict is continuing to displace households and impact access to food and income, maintaining Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes. Of concern are reports of people in inaccessible areas hiding in the bush and/or fleeing to safer areas, and likely facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes during this time.
- According to the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) emergency tracking tool, from March 27 to April 24, 2021, over 26,700 people were displaced following the attacks in Palma Sede. Since late March, the neighboring districts of Nangade, Mueda, Montpuez, and Pemba continue to register an increasing number of IDPs. To respond to the increasing emergency humanitarian needs and intervention for socioeconomic development in Palma, the government announced a plan valued at around 7 billion MZN (125 million USD), however around 10 percent is currently funded.
- With the start of the harvest, maize grain prices have continued to decline since peaking in February. In March, the price of maize grain decreased by 10-40 percent compared to February. In most markets, maize grain prices were 11-46 percent lower than their respective 2020 prices, except in Pemba and Maputo, where maize grain prices were 12 percent and 6 percent above their respective 2020 prices likely driven by high demand and local supply and demand dynamics. As typical, maize meal and rice prices were relatively stable from February to March 2021 across most monitored markets but were mixed compared to their respective 2020 levels and the five-year average. Overall, staple food prices are projected to follow seasonal trends.

CURRENT SITUATION

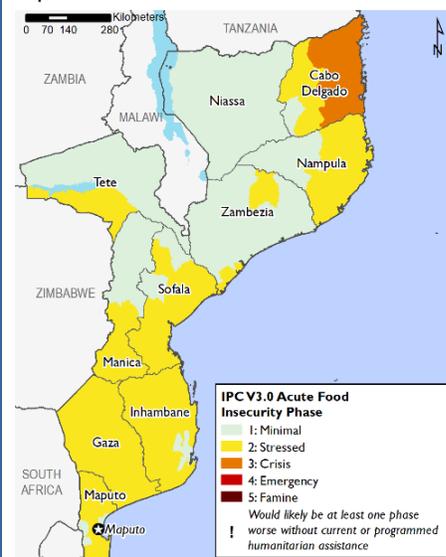
After three years of consecutive droughts in southern Mozambique, the current agricultural season has recorded average to above-average cumulative rainfall, particularly in the semi-arid interior of Gaza and Inhambane provinces, areas acutely impacted by the previous droughts. Based on the favorable agroclimatic conditions through the agricultural season, an above-average harvest is expected in those areas. However, in the lowland areas along the major rivers in Gaza and Maputo provinces, crops affected by early-season drought conditions and high temperatures in October and November, and flooding in

Projected food security outcomes, April to May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2021



Source: FEWS NET

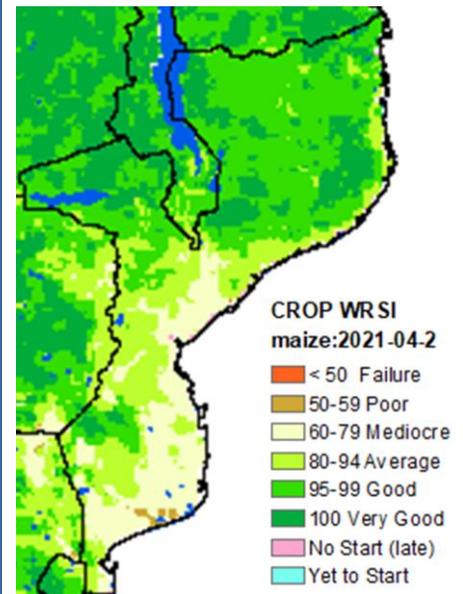
FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

January and February, resulted in crop losses, forcing affected households to replant but most are expected to recover their harvest in May/June. Overall, across the southern zone, a near-average harvest is expected. Most poor households are expected to gradually improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes with increased access to own production. Additionally, the seasonal decline of staple food prices in local markets is also improving food access. However, very poor households with limited seed stocks who failed to recover their harvests following crop losses from dryness or flooding earlier in the season are expected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and in need of targeted humanitarian food assistance.

In the central region, Sofala and Manica provinces have been affected by several tropical storms/cyclones over the last three years, including tropical cyclone Idai in 2019, tropical storm Chalane in 2020, and cyclones Eloise and Guambe in 2021, resulting in crop losses and livelihood disruptions for thousands of households. The additional shocks since cyclone Idai have slowed the pace of recovery and maintained Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes. Following seed distribution by local NGOs and the government, and local purchases from markets, most affected households were able to replant following the cyclones, and are expected to recover some of their harvests lost to flooding and wind damage. However, crop production in the affected areas is expected to be below average. Across the rest of the central region not directly impacted by the tropical storms and cyclones, although some areas were affected by fall armyworm (FAW), the harvest is expected to be average to above-average, particularly in Zambézia and Tete province, and inland/highland areas of Manica and Sofala provinces. Most of the households in the semi-arid zone of Tete are expected to improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Minimal (IPC Phase 1) as households access their harvests, while the remainder of the central region is expected to continue facing Minimal (IPC Phase 1) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes.

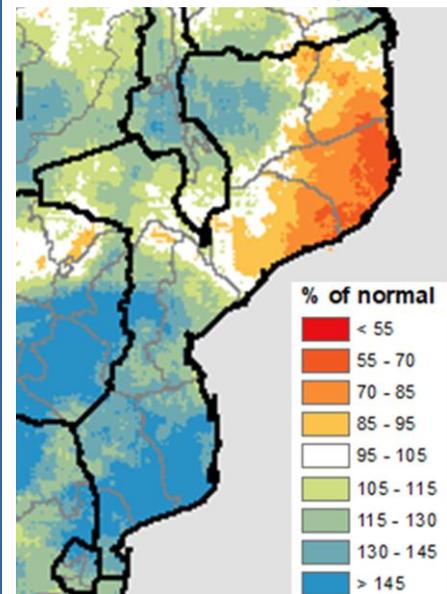
Across northern Mozambique, although the Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI) suggests good to very good crop performance based on the availability of water during the growing season, seasonal rainfall accumulation ranged from 55 percent to 85 percent of average between October 1, 2020, and April 25, 2021 (Figure 2). The most affected areas include the coastal and intermediate zone of Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces, where the harvest is expected to be below average. In these areas, erratic and significantly below-average rainfall from November 2020 to mid-January 2021, and abnormally high temperatures, resulted in several unsuccessful planting attempts exhausting household seed stocks, along with damage from pests like FAW, particularly in Nampula province. However, official estimates of the FAW damage are currently unavailable. Additionally, the conflict in Cabo Delgado continues to discourage many households from engaging in agricultural activities. Despite near-average rainfall since February, some households that replanted after losing earlier planted crops may still recover a below average harvest in June. In the meantime, affected households are engaging in consumption-based strategies, including consuming wild foods, and where it is available, green food after exhausting their food reserves over the lean season. In the province of Nampula, less vulnerable households are also selling available poultry or small ruminants, and charcoal and firewood for income for market purchases. Although most poor households are expected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), an increasing number of very poor households are engaged in coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3), such as relying on wild foods to fill consumption gaps. Due to the poor harvest, the lean season in the intermediate and coastal zones of Nampula and Cabo Delgado is expected to start in September, two months earlier than normal. In Cabo Delgado, the impacts of the poor rainy season are exacerbated by the continuation of the ongoing conflict. The recent attacks in the Palma district have increased the number of IDPs fleeing

Figure 1. Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI), April 20 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 2. Percent of normal seasonal rainfall accumulation, October 1 2020-April 25, 2021



Source: FEWS NET

the conflict and fear in the surrounding area of further attacks. According to International Organization for Migration's (IOM) [displacement tracking matrix](#) from March 27 to April 24, 2021, following the attacks in Palma Sede, the neighboring districts of Nangade, Mueda, Montpuez, and Pemba, over 26,700 people are likely to have been displaced from Palma. At least 75 percent of the new arrivals are staying with host households, while others are in accommodation centers. Reports collected by the Protection Cluster indicate that safe exit routes from Palma are almost non-existent, with road access to Tanzania or Nangade district deemed unsafe, forcing many IDPs from the Palma attack to use alternative routes through the bush and forests. There is growing concern that the IDPs traveling to safe areas are likely facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes during this time due to a lack of food and water. According to the April 18, 2021, update from the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (INGD), the conflict in Cabo Delgado and instability in central Mozambique have displaced 723,042 people to different locations in Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Zambézia, Manica, Sofala, and Inhambane provinces. However, almost 99 percent of IDPs are from Cabo Delgado. In close coordination with the government, humanitarian organizations are assisting IDPs and scaling up the ongoing humanitarian response in Cabo Delgado. More than half of Cabo Delgado province is facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes due to the disruption to typical food and income sources due to the conflict and mass-displacement.

In March, the Food Security Cluster (FSC) provided humanitarian food assistance (HFA) to 922,215 people, across Mozambique, approximately 52 percent of the planned beneficiaries. In April, the FSC is planning to provide HFA to 1,007,764 people, of which 667,500 are in Cabo Delgado. Since January, humanitarian organizations have highlighted that [a lack of funds](#) is constraining their response to assist the growing number of IDPs. In April, the government announced a plan to cover the costs of emergency humanitarian assistance and intervention for socio-economic development in the villa of Palma valued at around 7 billion MZN (125 million USD).

Since mid-February, COVID-19 cases have been steadily declining, with the national test positivity rate decreasing to 14 percent. In March, the government began its COVID-19 vaccination campaign and expects to vaccinate around 16.8 million people through 2021. Mozambique is accessing COVID-19 vaccinations through bilateral agreements and the COVAX initiative. Mozambique continues to observe the State of Public Calamity, which is expected to remain indefinitely at the red alert level. In April, the government extended the 10:00 pm to 4:00 am curfew for Maputo and Matola cities to all provincial capitals, and other urban centers including Manhiça, Gondola, Massinga, Chókwe, Maxixe, Moatize, Mocuba, Nacala, and Montepuez. However, the government has also relaxed control measures for some social sectors including the reopening, under reduced capacity of casinos and museums, gymnasiums, hotel pools, churches, in addition to extending business operating hours to 7 pm for commercial business and 8 pm for restaurants. However, poor households, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas, continue to struggle to obtain sufficient income and food due to the regulations limiting typical income-earning opportunities. Many households are still unable to engage in normal petty trade and casual labor activities; however, younger members of low-income households have been challenging the authorities by engaging in petty trade or searching for daily income-earning opportunities at the markets and in the streets. Poor households are also sending family members to stay with better-off relatives or relatives in rural areas, or try to cross the border into South Africa, where many are repatriated. The poorest households with limited opportunities to earn income or unable to engage in income-generating activities are likely facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.

Across most monitored markets, maize grain prices have continued to decline or remain stable with the start of the seasonal harvest. In March, maize grain prices in most markets decreased by between 10 and 40 percent compared to February. In some parts of the country, the harvest has been slow to start due to crops being in various stages of growth which is impacting local supply and demand dynamics. In most markets, maize grain prices were 11 to 46 percent below their respective 2020 prices, except in Pemba and Maputo, where maize grain prices were 12 and 6 percent above their respective 2020 prices likely driven by high demand and local supply and demand dynamics. Compared to the five-year average, maize grain prices in March were mixed but generally, maize grain prices have been following their respective seasonal trends. As typical, maize meal and rice prices were relatively stable from February to March 2021 in most monitored markets except for short-term changes caused by localized supply and demand dynamics. Overall, the staple food prices are projected to follow the seasonal trend. In mid-April, the government banned the importation of live poultry and poultry products from South Africa after the confirmation of an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) at a commercial South African farm. The import ban is likely to reduce national poultry and poultry product supplies and increase prices, particularly in urban centers.

UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

Overall, the assumptions used to develop FEWS NET's most likely scenario for the Mozambique [February to September 2021 Food Security Outlook](#) remain unchanged, except the following:

- Contrary to initial forecasts, the Mozambique Metical (MZN) has appreciated since early February, gaining around 24 percent against the USD. The appreciation is expected to encourage international imports and contribute to price decreases for imported products, including rice and wheat flour, in the medium and long term. However, forecast stability in these products' prices in the international market is likely to stabilize importation prices during the scenario period.

MOST LIKELY PROJECTED OUTCOMES THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2021

Through September 2021, most households across the country will face Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes as they access food from carryover stocks, market food purchases, and the main harvest. In most of the southern and central semi-arid zones, many households are likely to improve to Minimal (IPC Phase 1) or Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes as the expected above-average harvest, and the low seasonal staple food prices in local markets improve household food access. Households affected by flooding in February from heavy rainfall which resulted in crop losses along the main river basins in southern and central Mozambique, will likely continue facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes through May. However, households with access to seed are expected to recover with post-flood planting and second season production. In urban and peri-urban areas, very poor households are likely to continue facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes as the continuation of COVID-19 control measures continues to restrict income from casual trade and small commerce opportunities.

The Cabo Delgado conflict will continue to drive Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes through the scenario period, with attacks expected to increase the number of IDPs requiring HFA, as these people will lose access to their typical subsistence activities and income-generating opportunities. Of concern are reports of people in inaccessible areas hiding in the bush and/or fleeing to safer areas, and likely facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes during this time.

Large parts of central Mozambique will continue to face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes through May, while the districts most affected by tropical storms and cyclones (Búzi, Muanza, Nhamatanda, and Beira) are likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to the loss of assets and crops from flooding. Many households with seed stocks in these affected areas are likely to take advantage of the post-flood agroclimatic conditions and above-average residual moisture during the second season and recover a harvest in June/July, improving food security outcomes from June to Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

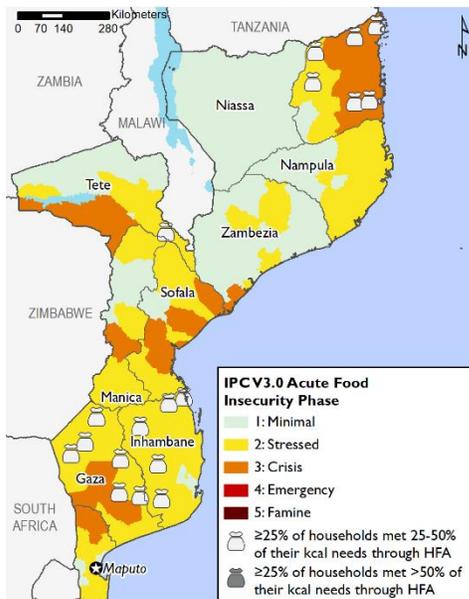
ABOUT THIS UPDATE

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.

MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES AND AREAS RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE*

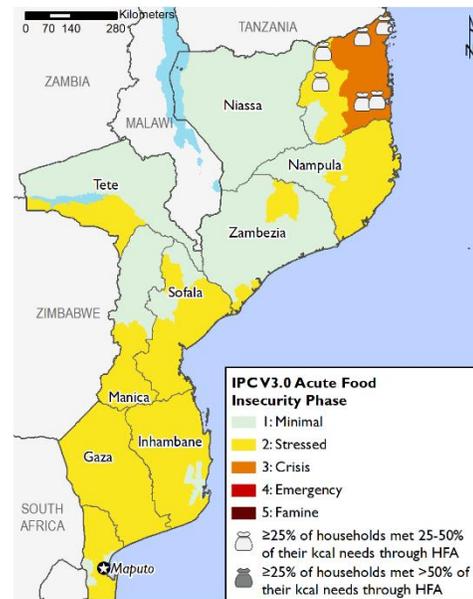
Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.0 humanitarian assistance mapping protocols and flags where significant levels of humanitarian assistance are being/are expected to be provided. ☺ indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average 25–50 percent of caloric needs from humanitarian food assistance (HFA). ☹ indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average over 50 percent of caloric needs through HFA. This mapping protocol differs from the (!) protocol used in the maps at the top of the report. The use of (!) indicates areas that would likely be at least one phase worse in the absence of current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

Projected food security outcomes, April to May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2021



Source: FEWS NET

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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.](#)