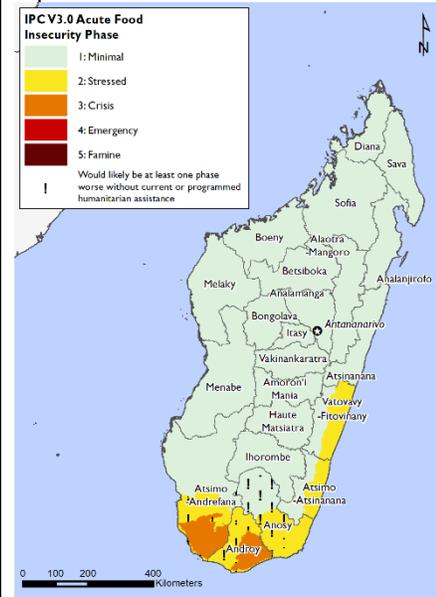


*Without large-scale aid after October, area-level Emergency (IPC Phase 4) remains likely*

**KEY MESSAGES**

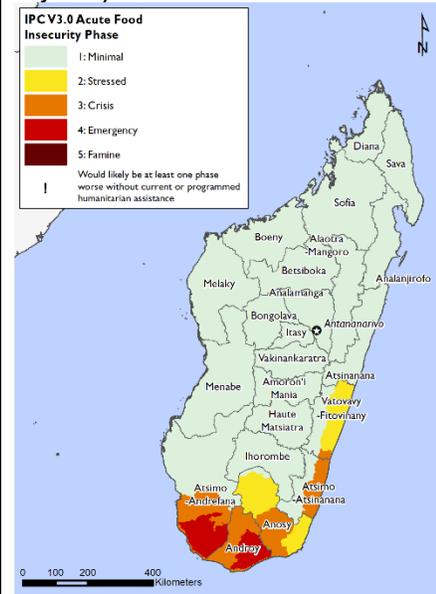
- Ongoing and planned humanitarian food assistance is anticipated to improve food security outcomes between August and October across much of southern Madagascar. Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) or Crisis! (IPC Phase 3!) outcomes are expected in most areas during this time. Humanitarian food assistance plans beyond October are not yet known. In the absence of humanitarian food assistance, outcomes would be expected to deteriorate notably to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) during the 2021/22 lean season.
- Ambovombe, Ampanihy, and Tsihombe districts are considered worst affected by recent shocks, including drought and high food prices. In these districts Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are anticipated during the lean season, in the absence of assistance, due to the failed cassava harvest, above-average food prices, and significantly limited labor opportunities.
- The recent July-August sweet potato harvest was average in the western half of the grand south, including parts of the districts of Beloha, Ambovombe, Tsihombe and Amboasary, where the winter rainfall between April and August, though very minimal, was above average. Elsewhere, sweet potato harvests were below-average due to poor rainfall. Despite a forecast of normal October 2021 to March 2022 rainfall, cropped area for the upcoming 2021/22 season is expected to be below average due to limited access to seeds and cuttings for most households following consecutive years of poor rainfall and production across the south.
- Recent above-normal rainfall damaged the Manambaro bridge, disrupting transport between Taolagnaro and areas west. Until permanent repairs are made to the bridge, large scale transport will be delayed when the water level is high. While trucks can cross the bridge during rehabilitation as long as the water level is normal, transport of food and fuel from the Taolagnaro port to Ambovombe and Amboasary districts, and mining and cash crop exports from Amboasary to the port, will be delayed. Subsequently, income-earning opportunities for poor households in Ambovombe and Amboasary will further narrow. Prices of goods are expected to increase significantly as internal supply is likely to be below average.

Projected food security outcomes, August to September 2020



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, October 2020 to January 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.

## CURRENT SITUATION

**Tuber production:** Due to the rainfall deficit between October 2020 and mid-February 2021, cassava production in Ihorombe, Betroka, and most parts of the big south is below average. Larger deficits have been observed in Ampanihy, Ambovombe, Amboasary, Beloha, and Tsihombe districts, where cropped area was reduced by more than 50 percent due to poor 2020/21 rainfall and lack of cuttings. 2021 sweet potato production is slightly better, as it requires less moisture, but overall remains slightly below average across the big south.

**Current food consumption, humanitarian food assistance:** Following the winter crop harvest, most households are currently consuming sweet potatoes and cassava. Vegetable production is also ongoing in areas where water availability allows and is helping to improve dietary quality for some households. The presence of humanitarian assistance is further improving staple food availability and overall food consumption among some poor households. In Amboasary, Beloha, Betroka, Bekily, and the four municipalities of Taolagnaro, assistance in the form of food and cash is contributing to helping cover the food deficit caused by poor production due to drought. However, in Ampanihy, Tsihombe, and Ambovombe districts, where cassava production is largely below average and humanitarian assistance does not cover all the food gaps, poor households continue to use more consumption-based coping strategies like reducing the frequency and quantity of meals. Households in these areas are also atypically relying on wild fruits as of August, a strategy that normally begins in October.

**Macroeconomy:** Compared to the second quarter of 2020, the gross value of imports decreased by 44 percent during the second quarter of 2021. During the same period, the gross value of exports in MGA increased by 60 percent, leading to the improvement of the exchange rate of MGA to USD in June compared to last year. However, in July, the national currency depreciated again, deteriorating to November 2020 levels, when COVID-19-related impacts on the trade balance were especially severe. The depreciation in July was driven by limited tourism and the high demand for imported food with anticipation of a bad cropping season in the eastern, central, and southern regions. Overall prices (inflation) during the second quarter of 2021 increased by four percent compared to last year, especially for imported food stuffs (rice, sugar, oil, etc.).

**Winter rainfall in the south:** According to key informants across the south, winter rainfall across the eastern half of the south, which typically averages only about three mm per five-day period from June to August, was slightly above last year and average levels. The rains helped to provide moisture for the sweet potato cropping season and further improved pasture and water conditions for livestock. Agricultural labor and wages during the harvest period are also near average. Sweet potato harvests, however, were below-average in Ampanihy and Beloha due to lack of cuttings and poor rainfall. Above-normal rainfall damaged the Manambaro bridge, disrupting transport between Taolagnao and areas west. Subsequently, fuel, food, and essential products from the port of Taolagnaro decreased significantly in August, contributing to current above-average prices (5 to 10 percent). In addition, income-earning for poor households working on micas mining in Amboasary was reduced compared to normal due to the damaged bridge. As of the end of August, transport across the bridge has returned to normal; however, until permanent repairs are made to the bridge, large scale transport will be delayed when the water level is high.

**Security conditions in the south:** The government significantly increased its military presence to fight the *dahalo* in the south in July, especially in Betroka, Bekily, Amboasary, and Ambovombe, to ensure the delivery of humanitarian food and cash distributions. The increased military presence allowed for greater delivery capacity in August.

**Livestock:** Due to favorable near-normal rainfall between mid-February and April 2021, followed by above-average winter rainfall between June and August, pasture and water conditions have improved. Livestock body conditions and poultry holdings improved compared to both last year and the lean season period, except for in Ampanihy, Ambovombe, and Tsihombe, where middle and poor households oversold livestock and poultry at such a high rate during the 2020/21 lean season that herd sizes remain lower this year than last.

## UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The current situation has not substantially changed most of the assumptions that went into FEWS NET's [most likely scenario for the period of June 2020 to January 2021](#). However, the following assumptions have been updated:

- **2021/2022 rainy season:** Below average precipitation is forecast in eastern Madagascar during the October-February period. In southern Madagascar, though, average rainfall is now forecast. (While it is no longer considered the most likely scenario, there remains the potential for below-average rainfall in southern Madagascar. FEWS NET's analysis on this event that could change the scenario is included in Table 1 below.)
- **Cassava production:** Due to rains having been delayed until February 2021, total moisture over the season was not sufficient for cassava production, and the harvest typically occurring in July-August will be delayed by 2 months. However,

while middle and better-off households will wait until maturation or will harvest for the next cropping season, immature fresh cassava will be consumed by the poorest households in August and September and their production of dried cassava will be near zero.

- **Seed and cutting availability:** As a result of the below-average 2021 cropping season of maize, pulses, and cassava, seed and cutting availability during the next cropping season will be significantly below average and prices for seeds on markets will increase significantly. As better-off households across southern Madagascar were also affected by poor production, they will likely struggle to raise incomes for seeds, leading to decreases in cropped area. The situation will likely be worse for poor households who will struggle to access seeds on the market given their overall lower income, which depends on limited labor opportunities from better-off households, who are likely to reduce the area they cultivate.
- **Manambaro bridge (Taolagnaro):** The expected duration of the bridge rehabilitation in Manambaro is more than three months, with finalization likely occurring during the rainy period in November–December. While trucks can cross the bridge during rehabilitation as long as the water level is not too high, transport of food and fuel from the Taolagnaro port to Ambovombe and Amboasary districts, as well as exports from mining and cash crops coming from Amboasary to the port, will be delayed. Subsequently, income-earning opportunities for poor households in Ambovombe and Amboasary will further decrease. Prices of goods are expected increase sharply as internal supply is likely to be below average.
- **Income sources** from illegal mining, charcoal, and wildlife trading are expected to be below average as the government is likely to enforce decrees against the exploitation of forest products to a higher degree than normal starting in September.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** Between August and October 2021, humanitarian actors and the government of Madagascar plan to distribute a half ration of a cash-based assistance targeting an average of 40 percent of the total population in the eight districts. Furthermore, in-kind humanitarian assistance is planned for an average of 24 percent of the total population in the eight districts from August to October. Plans are in place to distribute assistance to almost the entire population of Amboasary, including 50 to 80 percent of the population in Beloha, Ambovombe, Ampanihy, and Bekily; 40 percent of the population of Betroka and Tsihombe; and the four municipalities of Taolagnaro.

## PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH JANUARY 2021

In Tsihombe, Ampanihy, and Ambovombe districts, cassava production is expected to be near zero due to drought, sandstorms, and lack of cuttings. In addition, income sources from illegal mining, charcoal, and wildlife trading will be below average beginning in September. Livestock income earning will be minimal due to overselling during the last lean season and agricultural labor opportunities will be below normal as a result of below average production of tubers even for middle and better-off households. Food assistance through cash-based transfers is expected to reach between 35 and 50 percent of the population. However, in some areas, cash-based transfers are likely to have a more limited impact on food security due to poor targeting and because many southern markets function poorly and may not be able to absorb the increased demand associated with an unexpected influx of cash, which will likely drive prices higher than their already elevated levels. As a result, poor households will still face difficulty purchasing sufficient food to fully meet their basic needs. It's likely some will revert to selling more productive assets, consuming immature tubers, and reducing essential expenditures. Those districts will experience Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes between August and September.

Between August and September, the sweet potato harvest will improve staple food access in the extreme south including in Beloha, Bekily, Taolagnaro, Betroka, Tulear II, and Amboasary, and sweet potato leaves will act as an additional source of food for people and ruminants. However, production will be below average and will run out in early September. In addition, income earning from sweet potato sales, labor opportunities from sweet potato harvesting, livestock tending, and remittances from migrants will remain below average. The planned in-kind food assistance will help fill food consumption gaps. These areas will likely experience Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) acute food insecurity outcomes.

In the southeast and in all districts of MG22 and in MG27, rice production was below average due to the drought between October 2020 and February 2021 and income from tourism, mining, cash crops, and maritime fishing will be below average due to the remaining negative impacts of COVID-19. Subsequently, poor households may sell more non-productive assets and livestock and reduce the portion size and number of meals in August and September. Those areas will experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes during this projection period, except for Betroka, where Minimal! (IPC Phase 1!) outcomes are expected.

From October to January, staple food prices in the big south and in the south-east are expected to increase sharply, especially for cereals and dried cassava, because of the drought, which severely reduced rice, maize, and cassava production at the national level. Despite forecast average rainfall, middle, poor, and very poor households will have difficulty accessing seeds and cuttings to plant for the 2021/22 season following years of poor production. Food security outcomes remain consistent with those projected in the [June 2021 Food Security Outlook](#), with the exception of Tsihombe. From October to January,

Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are now considered most likely in Tsihombe due to overselling of livestock and other productive assets during the last lean period. Households were not able to replace these livestock and assets as after the harvest. Malnutrition rates over the Emergency threshold in June could re-emerge despite the slight decrease expected in August-September.

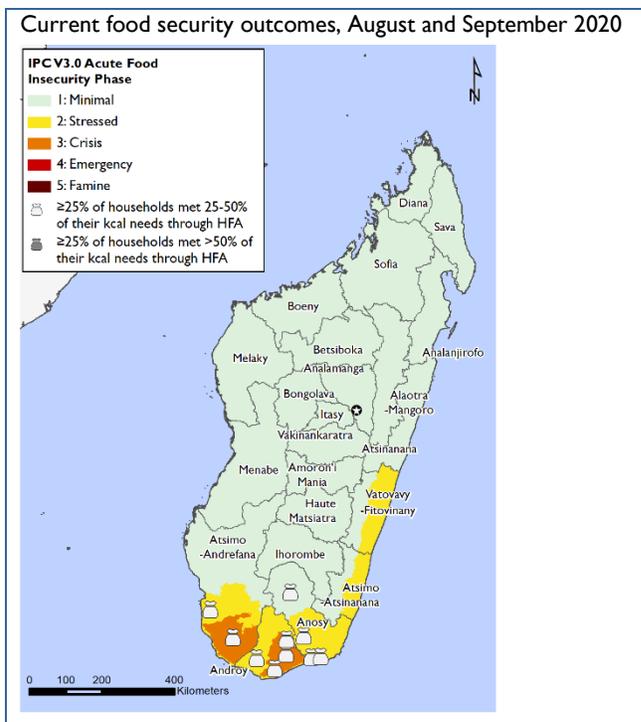
*Events that could change the Outlook*

**Table 1.** Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario

Areas	Events	Impact on food security
National	Re-implementation of COVID-19 restrictions (restricted inter-regional travel, curfew)	Lockdown and limited movement of people between regions is likely lead to lower income-earning opportunities and subsequently more households facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.
Southern area	Poor October 2021 to March 2022 rainfall	Below-average main season rainfall would likely lead to very low labor opportunities and negatively affect wild food and green harvest production, as well as pasture and water availability. This would in turn lead to more severe outcomes, including more widespread Emergency (IPC Phase 4) with populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

**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.



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.](#)