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Southern Africa

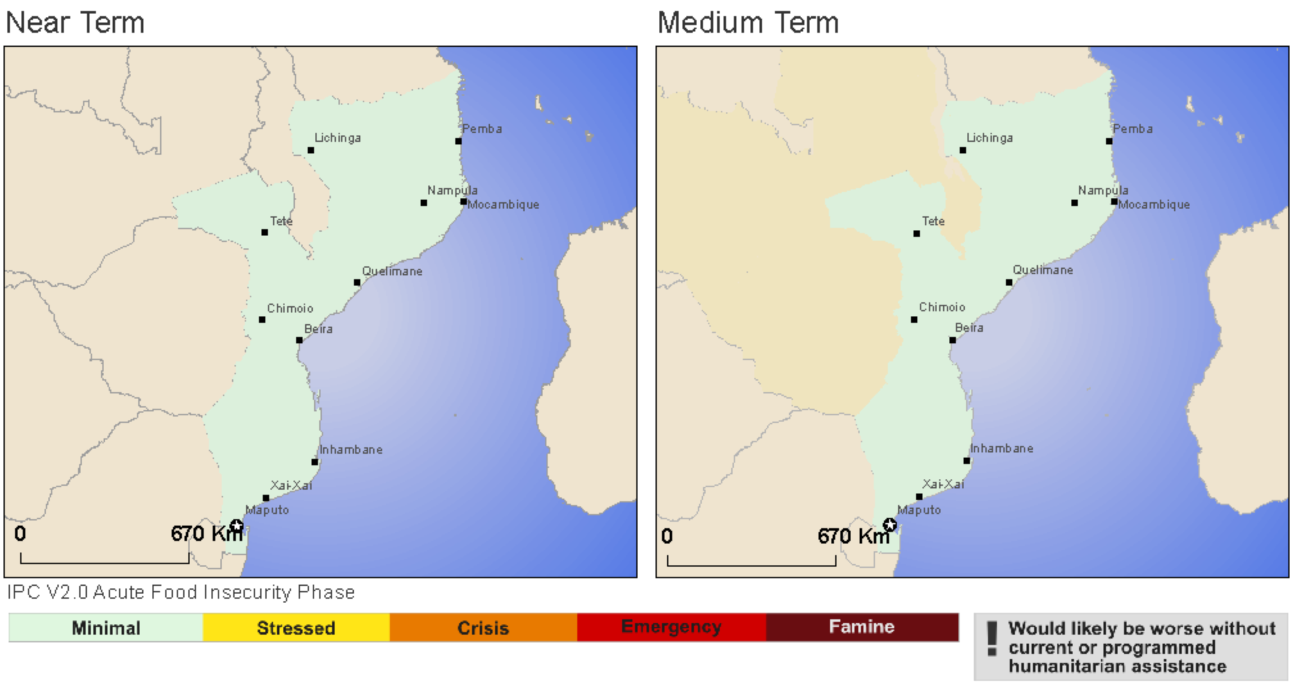
Mozambique

This country is monitored by local FEWS NET staff

Food Security Outlook

Household food availability improves and food security is expected to remain stable until September

April 2014 to September 2014



Key Messages:
Currently, the majority of rural households throughout the country are able to meet their basic food requirements through own production and are experiencing Minimal acute food insecurity outcomes (IPC Phase 1). Exceptions include localized areas that were adversely affected by this year's heavy rainfall and flooding and that are now receiving emergency assistance.

There are improvements in access to food through markets as staple food prices decline following the seasonal trend. Generally staple maize prices are close to the five-year average, except in Nampula where prices are 48 percent above average, but have been declining since early 2014.

Acute food insecurity will remain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) from April to June. Households will be able to meet their food needs owing to increased food availability from the 2013/14 main harvest and lower food prices.

In the second half of the scenario period (July to September), Minimal outcomes will continue as households have access to food stocks from the main season, begin to access second season harvests, and make local market purchases.

National Overview

CURRENT SITUATION

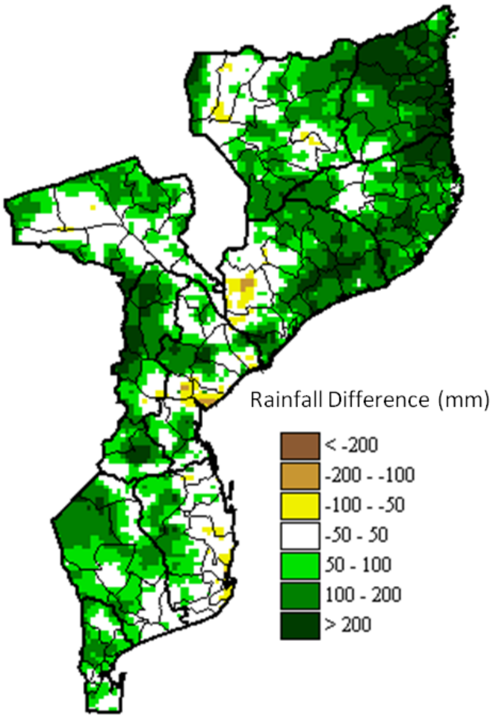


FIGURE 1. AVERAGE RAINFALL ANOMALIES, JANUARY 1 - MARCH 31, 2014.
Source: FEWS NET and USGS

- Throughout the country the majority of rural households are experiencing Minimal acute food insecurity outcomes (IPC Phase 1). A variety of food from the ongoing harvests is currently available and supplies are increasing in most markets.
- The harvest has started, but in comparison to typical years it was delayed in most parts of the southern and central region due to the later than normal onset of the rainfall season. Overall the crop production prospects at the national level indicate a near or above average performance, given that seasonal performance in the northern zone (the most productive area of the country) and parts of the central and southern region fared well. There was crop failure due to dry spells in the southern zone, but households were able to replant in December and harvest prospects are positive.
- Food availability and access is not a problem for most households, with the exception of localized areas in Incomati, Maputo, Limpopo Basins, coastal Cabo Delgado and Nampula. In these areas recent floods and cyclone Helen have constrained food access.
- In areas in the Limpopo Basin affected by floods in February and March (lowland and riverine areas near Chibuto, Chokwe, and Guija districts) food security is stable due to the late year harvests from post-flood production in 2013 and the ongoing harvest from the current season. In Maputo the harvest has already ended and households are focused on second season related activities.
- In general, the late-season dryness that affected parts of central Mozambique in mid-March did not cause noteworthy damage given that most crops had already reached maturity. This is the case because short and mid-cycle varieties (90 to

120 days) were planted in late November and early December. In the central region, dryness will likely reduce yields of rain-fed rice given that the long cycle varieties required more moisture for adequate development.

- In late March tropical cyclone Helen caused heavy rains (>200 percent of normal) in the northeastern zone (Figure 1). The affected areas included the districts of Quissanga, Balama, Montepuez, Metuge, Ibo, Mecufi, Mocimboa de Praia, Nangade and Muidumbe in Cabo Delgado and Nampula Provinces. The heavy rains brought by the tropical cyclone affected thousands of people and destroyed infrastructures, including roads, bridges and houses.
- The National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) and partners are providing the needed humanitarian support. Evaluation of the impact of cyclone Helen continues and preliminary estimates indicate that over 15,000 people were affected in Cabo Delgado and more than 300 people in Nampula. Most affected households are staying with relatives or living in temporary accommodation centers.
- Staple food prices are stable or on the decline according to the seasonal trend, however the decline is slower than usual due to the delay in the start of the rains for the main season. Most market supplies are a combination of last year’s produce and the newly harvested 2013/14 crops.
- Seasonal February to March price drops were observed in Chókwe (25 percent), Gorongosa (23 percent), Manica (11 percent), Tete (6 percent), Maputo (4 percent) and a small drop in Maxixe, while in Nampula the prices remained stable. Generally staple maize prices are close to the five-year average, except in Nampula where prices have been much higher.

ASSUMPTIONS

The Food Security Outlook for April to September 2014 is based on the following national-level assumptions:

AGROCLIMATOLOGY

- According to the SADC Climate Services Center, as the rainy season comes to a conclusion in the southern Africa region, the eastern half of Mozambique has increased chances of receiving normal to above-normal rainfall during the April-June period while the western half of the country has increased chances of receiving normal to below-normal rainfall. Any additional rain during the second season is complementary and could help to boost production levels. For the temperature, the Climate Services Center predicts a high likelihood of a cooler than normal winter for the central and the southern parts of the region. These cooler temperatures will help retain residual moisture that could benefit second season cropping.
- The Ministry of Agriculture has indicated that the overall national crop production prospects are expected to be near-average to above average. An April analysis of the Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI) for maize suggests average to very good WRSI for the central and northern zones of the country and below average in much of the south. However, field information suggests that in most of the south moisture was adequate for crop growth, indicating that the 2013/2014 cropping season is close to or above average.
- The second cropping season in lowland areas with residual moisture and in irrigated fields is expected to perform normally, with planting starting in April and the harvest expected in July/August.

MARKETS AND TRADE

- Maize prices are expected to keep decreasing from now through June and will start increasing in July. Maize prices are generally expected to follow the seasonal trend throughout the scenario period and will be close to the five-year average, except for maize in Nampula which will remain above the average. Seasonal price decreases between April and June will improve food access for market dependent households.
- Bean prices will continue to fluctuate throughout the outlook period depending on changes in the level of supply. The fluctuations are basically caused by delays or irregularities in bean supplies since most traded beans originate in remote areas (particularly in northern areas of Tete and Niassa Provinces).
- Since rice is mainly imported, prices are expected to generally remain unchanged and the same pattern will remain throughout the outlook period.
- The flow of food commodities and trade will remain the same in the outlook period, with surplus regions supplying the deficit areas of the country. However, some remote or inaccessible areas will be difficult to reach and this will limit trade with those areas.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

- Throughout the outlook period agriculture labor opportunities are expected to remain at normal levels. From April to June, much of the agriculture labor that is available will consist of harvest and land preparation activities, along with planting for the second season. From July to September, second season related activities will still be the most available source of agriculture labor opportunities.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- Humanitarian assistance is currently ongoing in zones that were affected by tropical cyclone Helen and the floods. The humanitarian assistance includes food and shelter for households that lost their houses and are currently living in the accommodation centers. This assistance will continue until affected households restore their minimum basic livelihoods.
- Distribution of seeds and other agriculture inputs for the affected households so that they can restart their agriculture activities and plant for the second season is expected to be adequate and timely.

MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES

Based on the above assumptions from April through June, the majority of households throughout the country will be able to meet their basic food needs thanks to the increased food availability from the harvest of the 2013/14 cropping season. During the first half of the outlook period, there will be increased agricultural labor opportunities which will increase incomes for very poor and poor households who depend on those opportunities for income. The poorest households will be working for wealthier households in harvest or planting activities in exchange for food. It is also expected that markets will enable the flow of food from surplus to deficit areas.

From July to September, the food security outcomes for the majority of households are expected to remain stable due to the availability of food reserves at household level from the main season and second season. Food prices for the staple foods are expected to be affordable for the majority of households and therefore purchases from the markets will complement food needs. Prospects for the second season are thus far favorable due mainly to the late rains in April that will provide the most needed moisture particularly in south where second season is widely practiced.

During the outlook period, typical livelihood strategies will be employed. Livelihood strategies may include selling crops, forest products such as building poles/grass, crafts (mats, traditional sieves, etc.), firewood, charcoal, and traditionally distilled alcohol. During this period no distress strategies are expected to be used. Later in the outlook period households needing cash may opt to diverting expenses from essential non-food items to purchase food.

In the zones affected by flooding and cyclone Helen, the recovery process will continue through provision of proper humanitarian assistance according to results from situational assessments. Therefore, a combination of ongoing social safety-net programs and emergency food assistance will be part of the response strategy for affected households that are at risk of acute food security.

Countrywide, the levels of acute food insecurity will be Minimal (IPC Phase 1) for the majority of the rural poor households during the outlook period.

Areas of Focus

LOWER LIMPOPO ALTA MAIZE, COASTAL INTERMEDIATE OF INHAMBANE LIVELIHOOD ZONES

CURRENT SITUATION

- In order to verify the prevailing food security conditions in areas where remote sensing data indicated the possibility of below average crop performance (Figure 1), FEWS NET carried out a rapid qualitative food security assessment from April 7-11, 2014. The assessment covered parts of Inhambane and Gaza Provinces (Figure 2) and consisted of key informant interviews with district administrative and agriculture authorities, community leaders, farmers, district based NGOs, and household representatives; as well as observations from community visits.
- In both of these provinces, substantial rains occurred in late October marking what appeared to be the start of the season. However, after substantial planting following the onset of rains, a long dry spell in November affected the planted crops. Some of the crops couldn't survive and new planting occurred in December with the

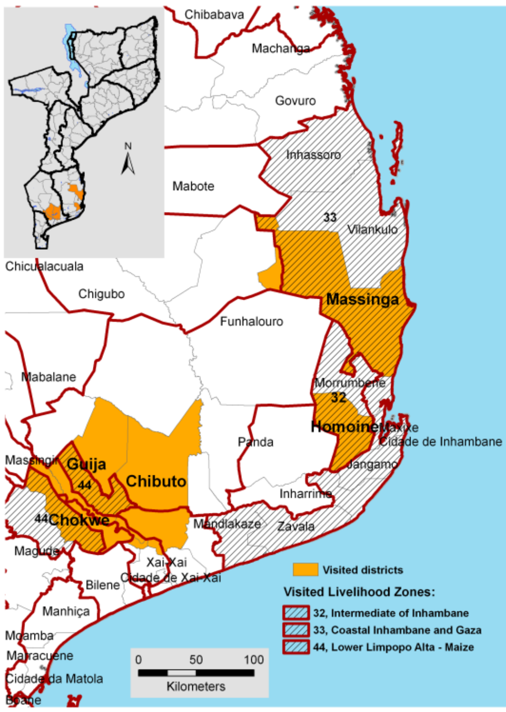
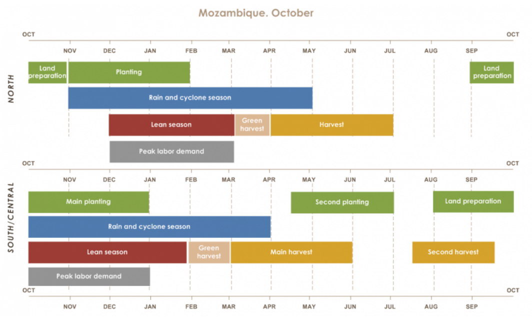


FIGURE 2. DISTRICTS (IN ORANGE) COVERED BY THE FEWS NET RAPID ASSESSMENT, APRIL 7 TO 11, 2014.

Source: FEWS NET

restart of rains in mid and late December.



SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR

- The December planted crops have performed well thanks to subsequent rains, especially in January. The December planted crops are currently maturing or being harvested. Prospects are good as most of planned crop production figures will be met or exceeded. The ongoing harvest includes maize, groundnuts and cassava. Most of the beans are now at flowering stage and prospects for bean the harvest in June is good. Food availability in both provinces is increasing and food prices at reference markets are decreasing.
- In Inhambane Province, FEWS NET visited two districts namely Massinga and Homoine (Figure 2). In Massinga district, the current agriculture season is seen as one of the best in the last five years. Production estimates for this season will exceed expectations and food availability will improve significantly. Food access for all wealth groups is expected to be adequate during the next 6 months. In Homoine district, the situation is similar to what was observed in Massinga district. Local markets are selling maize produced locally and the prices are affordable for the majority of households including the most poor.
- In Gaza Province, FEWS NET visited Chibuto and Guija districts. In these districts the harvest is ongoing. Expectations from provincial agriculture authorities will be met or exceeded. The reason for the increase in overall production is linked to favorable agroclimatic conditions and an increase of planted area by households that continue to plant whenever rains occur. In most parts of Gaza, households are still consuming maize from previous year thanks to above average post-flooding crop production from last year.
- In Gaza, the occurrence of mild flooding in February and March in the lowland areas of the Limpopo Basin have affected and destroyed maize crops. In Chibuto, 1,213 hectares representing nearly 1.2 percent of total planted area were lost due to floods while in Guijá, 489 hectares representing 0.7 percent of total planted areas were lost. In Chókwe, the lost area was much higher but has not yet been estimated.
- Staple food prices are decreasing in all markets. In Gaza, prices of maize are at their minimum for the last five years. A kilogram of maize in Chibuto, for instance, is costing MZM 7.40 and the available maize is all produced locally. In Inhambane, most of the maize traded is from the central region of the country. Current prices are varying from MZM 10.00 to MZM 15.00/Kg. However, cassava flour is the staple food in Inhambane and this is widely available at affordable price for all wealth groups. Cassava production this year is seen as one of the best for the last three years.

MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES

- In both provinces, activities related to the second season (i.e. land cleaning and planting) have already started. The second season will last until August/September and will include mostly horticulture crops including cabbages, white cabbage, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, garlic (especially in Homoine) and maize. The second season is a complementary season for the main season and is mostly practiced during the dry season (April-September) in lowlands with residual moisture or in irrigated areas.

- Currently there are no emergency operations in the both provinces. Most households across the two provinces are and will continue experiencing Minimal acute food insecurity outcomes (IPC Phase 1) throughout the scenario period. Rural households are meeting their basic food requirements by accessing a variety of foods from previous cropping seasons, current harvest, market purchases and employing their typical livelihood strategies.

Events that Might Change the Outlook

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

Area	Event	impact on food security outcomes
Entire Country	Traders do not respond as anticipated and no additional food stocks flow to the deficit areas	Local markets would be undersupplied, pushing food prices higher than currently observed and expected.
Entire Country	Increasing conflict	The intensification and expansion of conflict will force more people to leave their villages and therefore increase the number of acute food insecure people leading to higher IPC phase (Phase 2) in some areas.

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 six months. Learn more here.