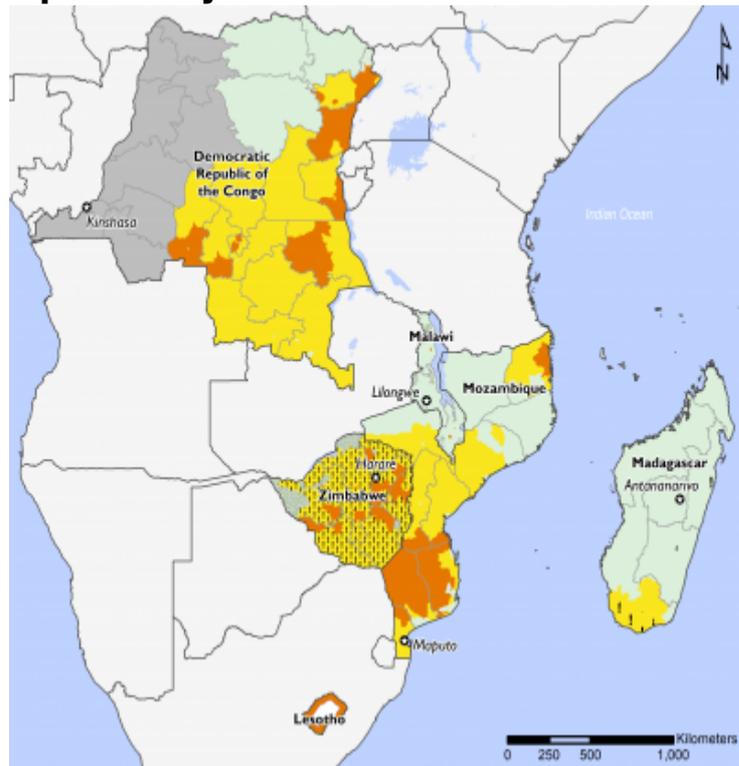


# Southern Africa

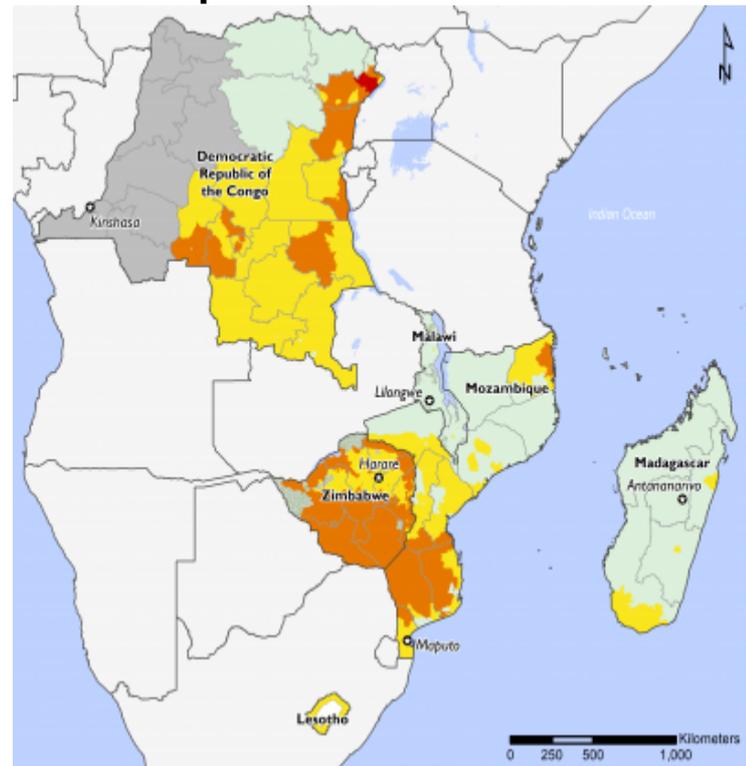
## Key Message Update

Impacts of COVID-19 and associated restrictions increase assistance needs, especially in urban areas

April - May 2020



June - September 2020



## IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

### Presence countries:

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine
- National Parks/Reserves

### Remote monitoring countries:

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3+: Crisis or higher

**!** *Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance*

Not mapped

*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. FEWS NET only maps the Eastern half of DRC.*

*FEWS NET Remote Monitoring countries use a colored outline to represent the highest IPC classification in areas of concern.*

## May 2020

### Key Messages:

The indirect impacts of COVID-19 including movement restrictions, border closures, and social distancing has led to a slowdown in economic activity, especially in urban areas. Although, the ongoing harvest is generally stabilizing household access to food and many areas are in Minimal (IPC Phase 1) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2). Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are present in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, DRC, and Lesotho where conflict has impacted household's ability to engage in normal livelihood activities or consecutive years of drought have impacted agriculture production. Humanitarian food assistance is preventing worse food security outcomes and Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) is present in parts of southern Madagascar and much of Zimbabwe. Moreover, in many urban areas where movement restrictions are in place, many households are facing difficulty accessing some of their food and non-food needs, which has led to an increase in urban food insecurity.

COVID-19 continues to spread in FEWS NET monitored geographies of Southern Africa with Lesotho reporting its first confirmed case in mid-May. The number of infected has increased fourfold to 2,522 cases, while the number of deaths doubled as of May 21 compared since April, with most reported cases in urban areas. In most countries, full and partial lockdowns are in place to reduce the spread of the virus. While these lockdowns are positive in managing the spread of COVID-19, they have adverse economic impacts as this negatively effects income- earning activities such as petty trade and informal employment. Many urban households have been exposed to increased levels of food insecurity as they cannot afford market foods due to disruption of their income sources.

Staple food prices have shown mixed trends across the region. Maize grain prices are starting to seasonally decrease as harvests start reaching markets in some areas of the region. For example, in some markets in Mozambique and Malawi, prices have decreased up to 55 percent and 41 percent, respectively, although prices remain above average. In DRC and Madagascar, lockdown measures resulted in immediate staple food price increases due to speculation of supply shortages; however, as supply remained firm and staple started decreasing. In Zimbabwe, as the macroeconomy continues to deteriorate prices of staple foods continue to increase at very high levels.

In mid- to late 2020, household food availability is likely to remain seasonally stable in the post-harvest period across much of the region. Although, in areas with a poor harvest, household food availability will most likely atypically decrease and be limited. These areas include much of Zimbabwe, southern Madagascar and Mozambique, and areas of DRC where conflict and flooding impacted the agriculture season. Purchasing power for many of these households is likely to be below average as access to income is limited associated with COVID-19 restrictions in addition to the poor macroeconomy in Zimbabwe and conflict in DRC. Moreover, in DRC border closures with many neighbors are likely to result in further price increases. As a result, the populations in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) are expected to be atypically high across much of the region. Additionally, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are expected in northeastern Ituri province of DRC.

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<https://fews.net/southern-africa/key-message-update/may-2020>

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*FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity. The content of this report does not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.*

