

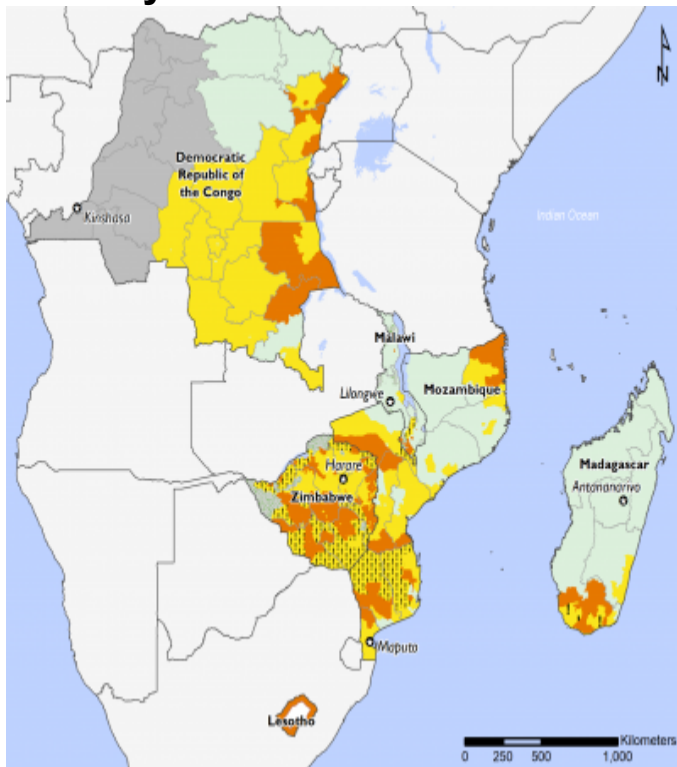
Famine Early Warning Systems Network

Southern Africa

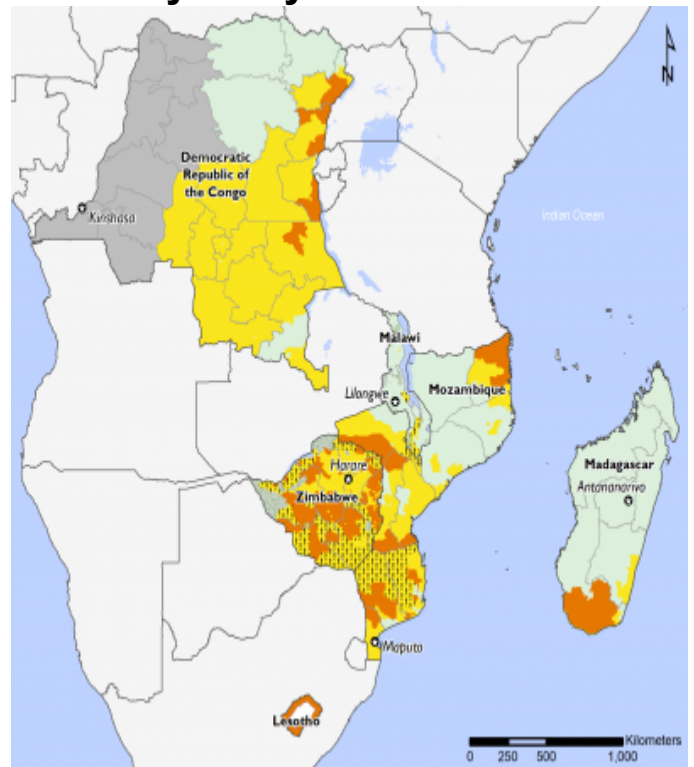
Key Message Update

The second COVID-19 wave in Southern Africa is likely to impact labor migration and remittances

January 2021



February - May 2021



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.

February 2021

Key Messages:

Southern Africa has been hit by a second, more severe wave of COVID-19, as most countries started economic recovery in late 2020. The most affected countries are South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Malawi, where the high case positivity rate led to reinstating restriction measures limiting people movement and closing some borders. This led to a reduction in access to income among some households; however, agricultural activities are generally continuing as typical. Most poor households are accessing food and income from agricultural labor, although wage rates remain below average. Most of the region is expected to continue facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes until the harvest beginning in April.

Rainfall across most Southern Africa has been average to above average, becoming one of the best in recent years. However, significantly below-average rainfall is of high concern in Madagascar, northern Mozambique, and central and southwestern Angola, where rainfall deficits are up to 50 percent of normal. In southern Madagascar, a drought is currently ongoing, negatively impacting crops and water availability. Rainfall over areas of eSwatini and northeastern South Africa, which touches the maize triangle, is somewhat below-average; however, due to high mechanization, these rainfall deficits are not of high concern. In January, Tropical Cyclone Eloise made landfall over northern Mozambique, decreasing rainfall deficits; however, destruction to crops and infrastructure were also reported.

The harvest is expected to be favorable across much of the region due to favorable rainfall performance and likely continued average rainfall. Crops across most of the region are in good condition at the vegetative to reproductive stage. Although in southern Madagascar, production is expected to be below average. As rainfall continues in much of the region, there is a risk of waterlogging and flooding in some areas, particularly Zimbabwe, central Mozambique, and areas of DRC and Malawi. While the rains are good, access to fertilizers remains limited to poor households. Pests and diseases also remain a threat. Despite the good rainfall season, the factors mentioned above will most likely contribute to a reduction in crop yields, especially for poor households.

Most water bodies have recharged, with some reaching maximum capacity in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Malawi. Water availability for humans and livestock is well above past years in many areas; however, it remains poor in far south Madagascar. Pastures have also improved across the region due to good rains, driving improvements in livestock body conditions. It is expected that livestock production will improve with the improved pasture, with some households restocking livestock after multiple poor seasons in areas of the region. However, continued poor pasture in southern Madagascar is driving lower than normal livestock conditions.

Region Contact Information:

Email: southernafrica@fews.net

<https://fews.net/southern-africa/key-message-update/february-2021>

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.

