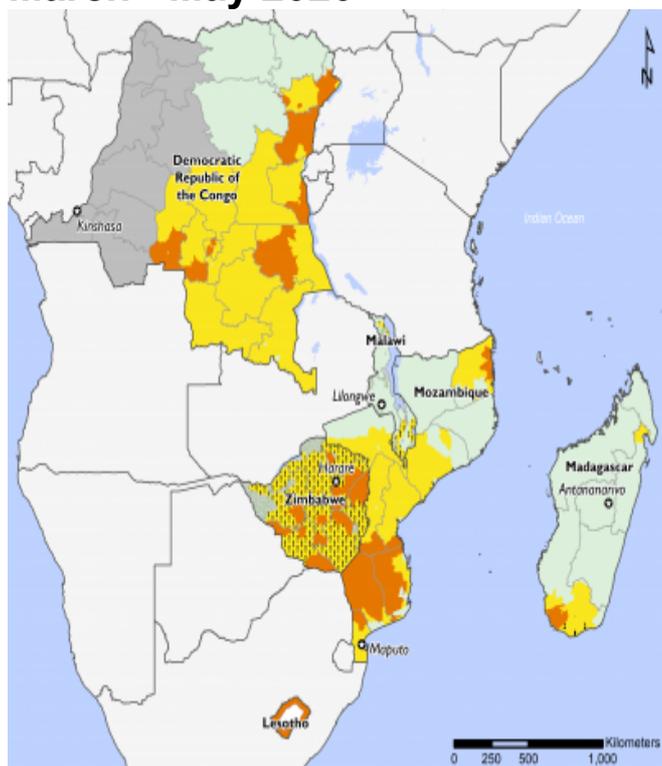


Southern Africa

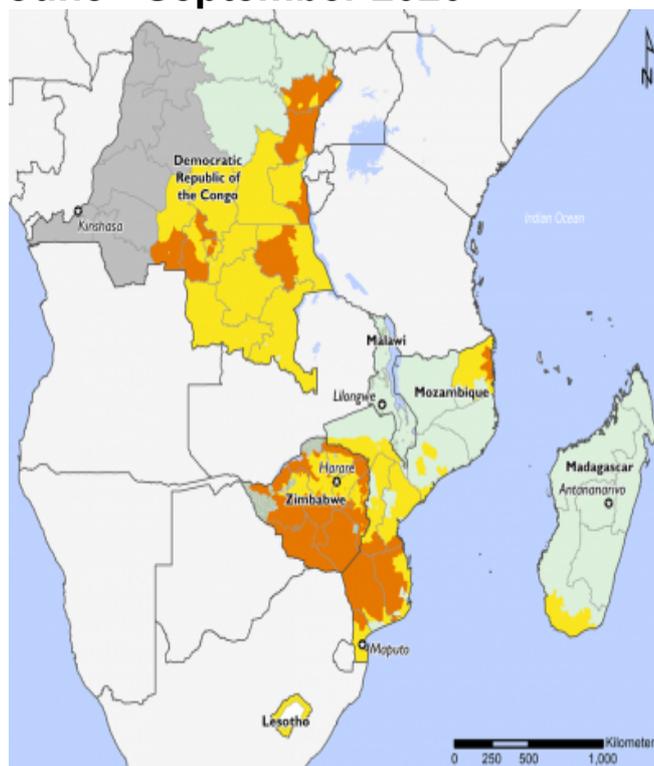
Key Message Update

Despite improvements in food security with the harvest, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) persist in some areas

March - 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.

April 2020

Key Messages:

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes persist in much of Zimbabwe, southern Madagascar, and parts of Mozambique where the harvest has yet to start and in conflict-affected areas of Mozambique and DRC. The start of the green harvest in some areas is helping to improve some household's food consumption. Humanitarian assistance is mitigating food insecurity outcomes in parts of Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique where Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) continues. The main harvest is expected in late-April/May across much of the region, leading to large-scale improvements in food security to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Minimal (IPC Phase 1), as most households, will consume maize grain from own production. However, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to persist in parts of Zimbabwe, DRC, and Mozambique, where crops failed due to poor rainfall or conflict disrupted the agriculture season.

As of April 27, 724 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 35 deaths have been reported in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique. Only Lesotho in FEWS NET monitored geographies has no confirmed cases of COVID-19. Due to limited testing capacity of many countries in the region, the number of infected people is likely to be higher than the official figures. To reduce the rate of infections, Malawi, Mozambique, DRC, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar have all put in place lockdown measures, including border closures. While basic commodities like food are still allowed to move across borders. Although, households from countries like Mozambique and Zimbabwe who typically earn incomes in South Africa through seasonal labor will likely be affected and remittances to parts of southern Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Mozambique are expected to decline. This is happening at a time when these areas have been affected by consecutive droughts and households usually use incomes from remittances to access staple food through market purchases.

Several urban areas in the region were under lockdown in March, which were implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19, limiting the livelihoods for the urban poor. Most urban populations in countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar earn their incomes through informal employment like petty trade with little savings. With restrictions limiting people movement, these petty trade activities have been adversely affected leaving a large number of households having difficulty accessing market foods. The situation is worse in Zimbabwe where the poor macroeconomic conditions are now compounded by the impacts of COVID-19. Overall, food assistance needs are expected to be higher than previously anticipated across the region due to the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19.

Staple food prices typically seasonally peak in March, although this year prices in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, DRC, and Madagascar are atypically high. In Zimbabwe where maize meal availability is limited, prices are more than ten times the five-year average while in Mozambique, maize grain prices are up to 100 percent above the five-year average. In Malawi, although prices have marginally decreased, March maize prices in Mitundu, the national

reference market, were 90 percent higher than the five-year average. These prices are beyond what most poor households can afford and will likely affect their food access given their weak purchasing power.

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

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