

Reference Date: 15-April-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable harvest prospects for the 2011 main season paddy and maize crops
- Stable cereal production in 2010 was achieved
- Chronic poverty and food insecurity persist

Favourable prospects for 2011 main season paddy and maize crops

Judging from the remote sensing images of estimated rainfall and NDVI, the country received an above average rainfall for the current agricultural season, starting last November, leading to a good vegetative growth. Thus the prospects for harvest of maize, currently underway, and paddy which will take place from May to July, are generally favourable.

Good cereal production in 2010

Total cereal production for 2010 is estimated at 250 000 tonnes, slightly below the record harvest of the year before but still some 40 percent above the average of the previous five years. Maize production has returned to more normal levels. However, paddy production was up due to increase in both area planted and average yields.

Crop monitoring and production estimation in Timor-Leste is not rigorous and extensive owing to the lack of technical capacity and resources. Hence it is likely that these estimates are on the high side.

Chronic poverty and food insecurity persist

Although the per capita Gross National Income has increased from USD 395 in 2002 to USD 1 510 in 2007, Timor-Leste remains the poorest country in the Asian region. More than 40 percent of the population is believed to be living below the national poverty line. Thus food insecurity needs to be monitored due to the country's high dependence on cereal imports, social instability, and high unemployment.



Timor-Leste Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 estimate	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	104	135	120	-11
Rice (paddy)	75	121	130	7
Total	179	256	250	-2

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
 Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

