

Famine Early Warning Systems Network

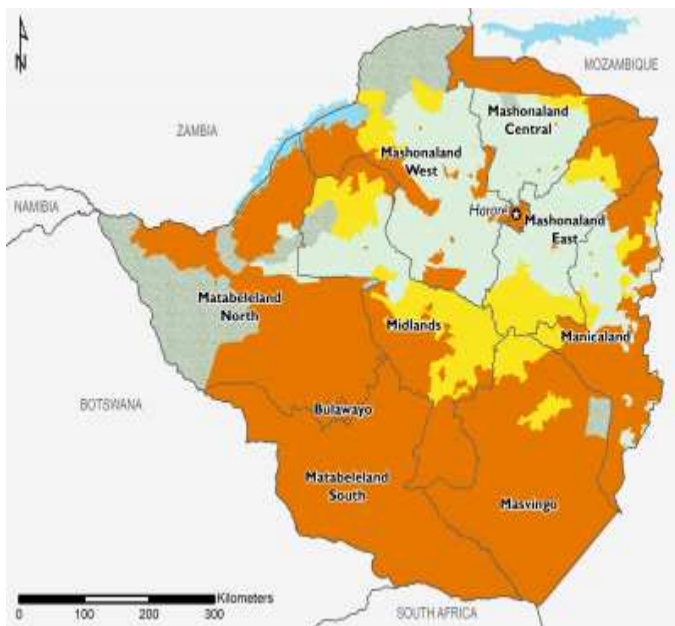
Southern Africa

Zimbabwe

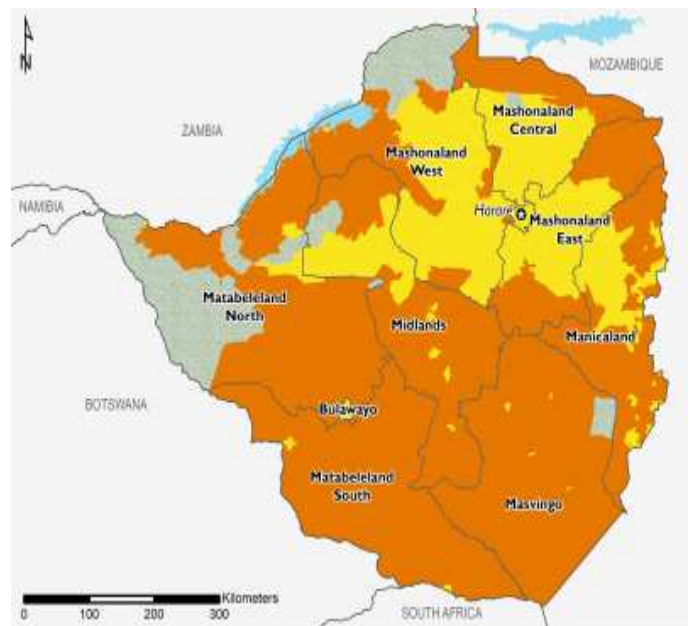
Key Message Update

Relaxation of COVID-19 restriction measures expected to increase income access

September 2020



October 2020 - January 2021



IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase



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

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.

September 2020

Key Messages:

Deficit crop-producing areas of the country are expected to continue experiencing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes through at least January 2021. This is most likely due to the continued reliance of poor households on market foods with significantly below-normal purchasing power. Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes will most likely emerge in surplus-producing areas around October as own-produced food stocks are depleted. Low-income urban household income and food access is expected to increase somewhat since most COVID-19 restriction measures are being relaxed, most likely improving food security to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) starting in October.

In September, the government eased most COVID-19 restrictions that limited the movement of people by increasing business hours, resumption of long-distance inter-city and rural-urban transport services, and domestic tourism, among others. The anticipated reopening of national borders in early October will likely increase informal cross-border trade, remittance flows, and labor opportunities improving income, especially in the informal sector and urban areas. However, given the number of COVID-19 infections is still rising, though at slower rates, and testing rates are low, the relaxed measures pose some risk of increasing infections. As a result, there is potential that stringent measures may be re-introduced in the medium term.

Though some stability in the official and parallel market exchange rates has largely curbed price volatility on the markets, some price increases of certain goods and services continue to be recorded. Official annual inflation for August dropped to 761 percent from 838 percent in July, with monthly inflation reducing to 8.4 percent from 35.5 percent during the same period, driven mainly by stabilization in the exchange rates. However, basic commodity and service prices remain significantly above average and unaffordable to poor households, a situation expected to prevail through at least January.

International climate models forecast average and above-average rainfall for Zimbabwe from October to December and January to March 2021, respectively. Prior to the start of the season, the water crisis is expected to worsen. There is also the risk of heavy storms, cyclones, flooding, and waterlogging, as well as increased incidences of crop and livestock pests and disease and human water-borne diseases during the coming rainfall season.

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

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