ANGOLA Drought Assessment Special Report — October 31, 2013

KEY MESSAGES

- Due to severe drought in most of the Southern Livestock, Millet, and Sorghum livelihood zone in early 2013, water availability, pasture conditions, and harvests are significantly below-average. In Namibe Province this is the second consecutive year of drought for many households. In both Namibe and Cunene livestock migration occurred earlier, involved more animals, more people, and more time than usual.

- Given current conditions and expectations for average rainfall, poor households in Namibe and Cunene are expected to be Stressed (Phase 2) until harvests arrive in March. In comparison, access to water and livestock conditions are better in Cuando Cubango, and as a result of assistance, Minimal (IPC Phase 1!) acute food insecurity outcomes are expected over the same period.

- The Angolan government is providing assistance to the affected populations, which is sufficient to meet minimum needs. However, the impact of the food assistance is more effective in Cuando Cubango, where households are receiving regular and complete rations; assistance to households in Namibe and Cunene is less effective in improving food access because of distribution irregularities.

CONTEXT

Assessment methodology

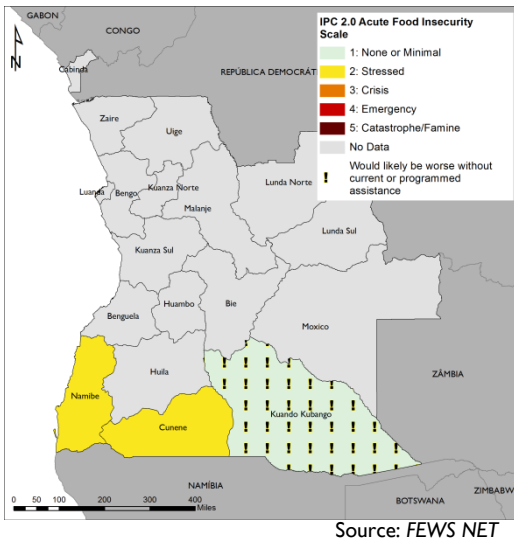
Due to poor rainfall in early 2013 in southern and western Angola (Figure 3), USAID requested that FEWS NET conduct a rapid food security assessment in Namibe, Cunene, and Cuando Cubango Provinces. FEWS NET—in partnership with World Vision—undertook a field assessment in Angola from September 16-23, 2013 to assess current and projected food security impacts related to the 2011/12 and 2012/13 droughts.

The assessment was carried out through 1) discussions with key informants aided by open-ended questionnaires and 2) visits to local markets and accessible villages identified as being significantly affected by the drought.

Areas of concern

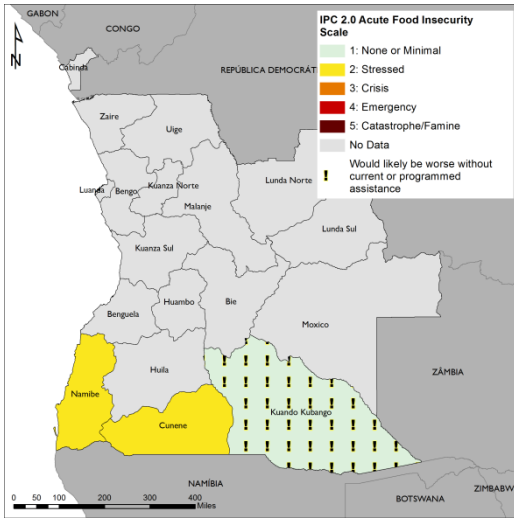
The areas visited in the three provinces are a part of the Southern

Figure 1. Projected food security outcomes for October-December.



Source: *FEWS NET*

Figure 2. Projected food security outcomes in Angola for January-March.



Source: *FEWS NET*

These maps represent *acute* food insecurity outcomes in significant areas of concern relevant for emergency decision-making. They do not necessarily reflect outcomes across the country or *chronic* food insecurity. Visit http://www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale for more.

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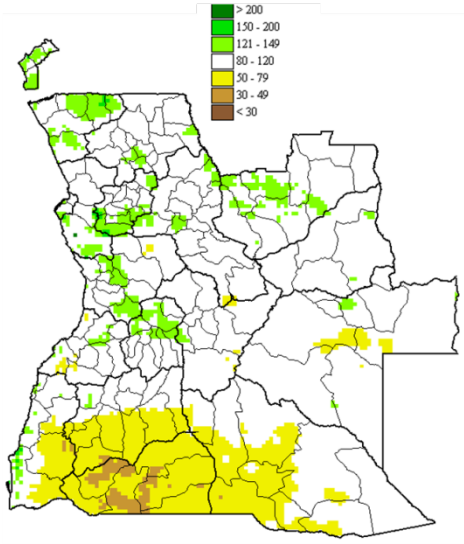
Livestock, Millet and Sorghum Livelihood zone. This is an arid part of the country with 200 – 400 mm rainfall per annum and high inter-annual rainfall variability generally suited to rangeland and transhumant[1] pastoralism. While most households own cattle; goats, sheep, pigs, and poultry are the primary livelihood assets among the poor. Cattle are rarely sold unless a household is under duress or the cattle are in extremely poor condition as a result of drought conditions. Access to lowlands (riverbeds, depressions, etc.) for agriculture is also a major livelihood asset, particularly in the western part of the livelihood zone. Dry spells and droughts are common hazards across the livelihood zone. Rains support millet farming, though yields are very low; depressions support irrigated agriculture of sorghum and vegetables. Normally local production of millet and sorghum provides food for consumption for up to half of the year, while during the other half of the year consumption needs are met through market food purchases. Since areas in Namibe, Cunene and Cuando Cubango are maize and bean deficit, markets are supplied by nearby Huila Province (maize and beans) and Namibia (maize). Physical access to local markets is relatively good due to a fairly well distributed road network across this part of Angola. People living in the zone depend on the sale of livestock (mainly small stock), own cereal production as well as market purchases for food, fishing (coastal and riverine areas), gardening, and labor markets fueled by trade and industry.

Key findings

Due to the poor rainfall, access to water for livestock, human consumption, and agriculture is the major constraint for households to meet their minimum needs at the peak of the 2013/14 lean season. Throughout affected areas, livestock migration began one to three months earlier than usual, involved longer distances, more animals, and more people. Although all three provinces share the same livelihood zone, there is a subtle difference in their reliance on agricultural production for food. Out of the three areas, Cubango Cubango is slightly less reliant on agricultural production. Overall, harvests are estimated to range from 50 to 70 percent below average in the zone. The Government of Angola is also providing food and development assistance in these areas and this is meeting a significant portion of minimum needs for poor households in Cubango Cubango. In Namibe and Cunene this assistance is making less of an impact on improving household food insecurity because of distribution irregularities and incomplete rations. It should be noted that while assistance is targeted at affected households, the assessment was not able to ascertain how this assistance is being provided to households that migrated with their cattle.

Figure 3. Percentage of average rainfall for Jan 1 to Mar 31, 2013.



Source: USGS/*FEWS NET*

Assumptions and projected outcomes

- Due to the longer distance and duration of this year's migration, households are expected to return to their areas of origin one to two months later than usual: in November-January instead of October-December. This may slightly reduce area planted for the 2013/14 cropping season compared to average due to below-average supply of agricultural labor and the absence of families to be able to manage planting. This may also result in a slight delay in the availability of the green harvest.

- Cattle births, and therefore, milk availability, are likely to be slightly (< 20 percent) below average during the wet season due to the poor livestock body conditions and stresses of the long migration. Conceptions are likely to be above average in 2013/14 due to the larger than usual number of females available to conceive.

- Based on the Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-17) forecast, 2013/14 rains are likely to be near average in most of the Southern Livestock, Millet and Sorghum Livelihood zone, with an expectation of below average rains at the beginning of the season in the western part of the zone.

[1] The seasonal migration of livestock, and the people who tend them, between lowlands and adjacent mountains.

- Near-average regeneration of pasture and water sources, as well as near-average harvests are expected in 2013/14. However, there may be a delay in reaching normal conditions (water, pasture, animal body conditions) due to current below-average levels and the longer return time from the long migration.

As a result of lower food stocks from own production and the longer migration, more than 20 percent of households of Namibe and Cunene are Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or are minimally able to meet their food needs, but are unable to purchase non-food items. Some assistance is being provided by the Government, but it is not improving food security outcomes because it is being distributed irregularly and households are only receiving parts of the food basket. In Cuando Cubango, at least 80 percent of households are able to meet their minimum food and livelihood protection needs with the assistance provided by the Government and partners. Acute food insecurity is Minimal with assistance (IPC Phase 1!) in this area as the population is concentrated near the two perennial rivers (Kuvango and Kuito) running through the province, allowing households to access water for fishing and irrigation.

NAMIBE PROVINCE CONDITIONS AND PROJECTED OUTCOMES THROUGH MARCH 2013

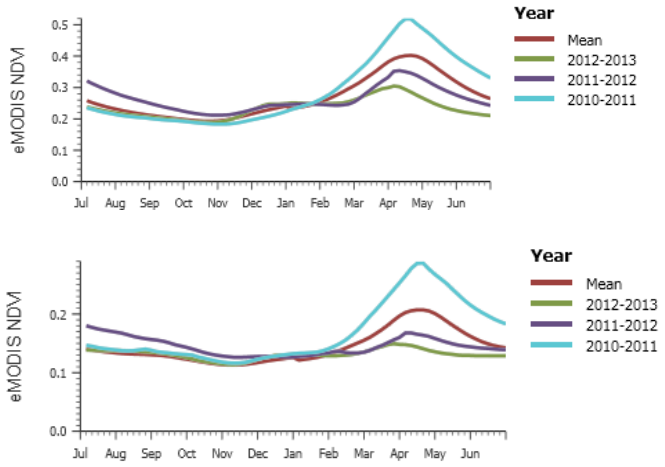
Conditions in Namibe are worse than in Cunene because of the greater severity of this year's drought and the cumulative effects of facing two, consecutive droughts. Though more people in Cunene are affected by the drought, the proportion of the population affected by drought in Namibe (62 percent) is greater than that of Cunene (48 percent). The impacts of the two years of drought were significant and severe in the Southern Livestock, Millet and Sorghum Livelihood zone, particularly in the predominantly pastoralist agropastoral areas of the southern and western parts of the province (municipalities of Virei, Tombua, Bibala, and to a lesser extent, Camucuio) (Figure 4). Specific effects in this province include:

- The long migration northward began three to six months early and ended further than usual. For example, pastoralists from areas inside Virei (Namibe) went to Chongoroi (Southern Benguela) nearly 500 km away. Some families reportedly removed children from school in order to move together. For the first time, a few small schools (<20 students) have closed as a result[2].

- By moving so early and so far, most cattle missed the vaccination campaigns for a second year, rendering them more vulnerable to disease.

- As previously mentioned, cattle are rarely sold unless they are in extremely poor condition or if a household is under duress. Prices for cattle in good condition are average; however the cattle being sold in this area are mostly those that are in poor condition. Once the rains begin and cattle return in November-January, cattle sales will decline seasonably.

Figure 4. eMODIS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index trends for Virei (top) and Tombua (bottom) municipalities of Namibe Province.



Source: *USGS/FEWS NET*

- Cereal, goat, and pig markets are functioning relatively well. Terms of trade for goats and pigs, key income sources for the poor in the area, are within an average range of 40-60kg and 20-40kg for goats and pigs respectively. These trends are expected to continue in keeping with seasonal trends through the end of the projection period (March 2014).

- There are reports of complete crop failure in the area in 2013, primarily for rain-fed millet. Yields were also down for sorghum, maize, and vegetables, typically planted across all of the wealth groups in this area. As a result, demand for agricultural labor was below average. Road construction in the area will partly compensate for the loss of income from agricultural labor. Since many households sow crops for consumption, their production was reduced and they began to rely on markets for cereal purchases, bartering, and livestock sales several months earlier than usual. Cereal supply on

[2] Please note that in recent years school enrollment has increased in rural areas in Angola. Therefore, it is possible that entire families have migrated because of a shock, but this is the first incident where schools have closed as a result of children being removed.

markets, however, is near average levels, prices are relatively stable, and traders report that they are only 10 percent higher than last year and not significantly higher than those of normal season. Over the longer term, the viability of agriculture in the area, even irrigated agriculture, is questionable due to the low levels of rainfall, high variability, and steadily declining water table.

- Though livestock migration was unusually early and long, households remaining in the area are practicing typical livelihood strategies (charcoal production and sale, collection and sale of bush products, and petty trade).

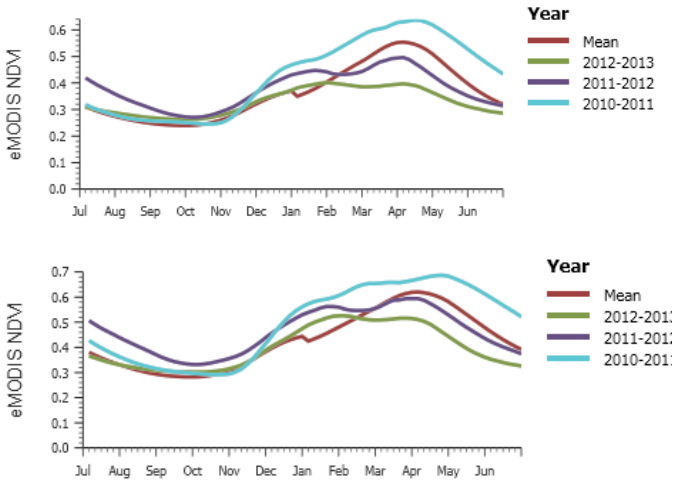
- Government emergency food assistance programs are underway in the area; this assistance is expected to continue through at least March 2014. It is not clear that assistance is being provided to households in transhumance.

These conditions suggest that at least 20 percent of households, predominantly the poor, are currently able to meet their minimum food needs but have difficulty meeting their non-food needs. Based on this information, households in this area are currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2), and although water and pasture conditions will improve with the seasonal rains (slightly improving access to milk), these food insecurity outcomes are likely to continue until the harvest in April.

CUNENE PROVINCE

Different parts of Cunene Province face mild-to-moderate droughts or floods each year. However, rainfall in 2013 was significantly worse than average leading to below-average vegetation conditions, particularly in the western parts of the province bordering Namibe, including Oncôcua (Curoca municipality) and Cahama town, Otchinjau, Evale, and Mongua in Cahama municipality (Figure 4). Rains were also below average in the northern parts of the province in Cuvelai (Mupa municipality), and southern parts near Ombala yo Mungo (Ombadja municipality). Rainfall and vegetation conditions were also significantly below average for a second, consecutive season in Curoca municipality, though relatively close to average for the rest of the province.

Figure 4. eMODIS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index trends for Curoca (top) and Cahama (bottom) municipalities of Cunene Province.



Source: *USGS/FEWS NET*

Given the similarities in livelihoods, the magnitude and type of shock, the scale of assistance, and projected future events, food security outcomes in western Cunene in particular, are very similar to those in Namibe, Stressed (IPC Phase 2), though slightly better in Cunene. Particularities of drought impacts in Cunene include:

- Despite areas of relatively worse-than-average rainfall, absolute rainfall was relatively greater in Cunene. As a result, harvests in Cunene were 50-70 percent below average, compared to 70 percent below average in Namibe.

- Transhumance in both areas began five to six months early in April and is expected to conclude in November/December with the rains with similar impacts on school closures. Remaining cattle were walking nearly 80 km between pasture and water every two days during the assessment compared to 30 km at this point of the season in a typical year. There are also concerns about significant overgrazing in Chimboro area with a confluence of cattle from Cunene and Namibia.

- Poor households have begun producing and selling charcoal, gathering wild food for consumption and sale, fishing, and selling other forest products for income to purchase food. These strategies are not typical for the season or the area. Normally, households usually sell milk and milk products, goats, chickens, and participate in contract herding for income.

- Key informants also indicated that prices for staple foods are approximately 10 percent higher than those observed over the same period in the last two years due to the above-average demand from below-average local production. Households are refraining from selling or bartering cattle, primarily a social asset, until the animals are near death.

- Both the government and non-governmental organizations are providing assistance to poor households in drought-affected areas, though there are complaints that the food items that are distributed do not always meet the food preferences of the targeted populations and logistical bottlenecks are reported.

- Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurements were taken from 37 convenience-sampled children aged 6 to 59 months in two villages in Ombadja municipality by our WVI partners. Four of the children were found to be moderately malnourished (MUAC <125mm).

Based on these conditions, poor households are minimally able to meet their food needs, but are experiencing some livelihood protection deficits. Households are expected to continue to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) until the harvests in March/April. Even though water availability and pasture conditions will start to improve with the onset of rains, this will probably not result in better livestock conditions for several months. Additionally, the ongoing Government assistance is not expected to mitigate household food insecurity during the peak of the lean season, between January and March.

CUANDO CUBANGO PROVINCE

Cuando Cubango is faring better than Namibe and Cunene because the drought conditions were relatively less severe, and because the province is facing one year of drought rather than successive droughts. In addition to this, more than 90 percent of households in the municipalities most affected by drought are concentrated along the rivers, which provide a constant source of water and pasture for livestock. In Cuando Cubango:

- In comparison to Namibe and Cunene, crop performance in Cuando Cubango was similarly poor, however this was less due to rainfall totals than because the rains ceased in late March, during the flowering stage, instead of normally ending in mid/late April. Additionally, there was crop damage from wild animals. Agricultural labor demand was also below average.

- Animal body conditions are good thanks to permanent availability of water and pasture from the Kubango and Kuito rivers. River weeds, in fact, are a common supplementary feed.

- Tuberculosis and foot and mouth were reported as the greatest concerns in Mavenga and Maué Communes in Calai Municipality.

- Poor households are engaging in typical livelihood strategies, including cutting and selling of reeds used for construction in Namibia; selling goats, pigs, and poultry; and selling wild game. Fishing for own consumption and for sale, however, has intensified due to the drought.

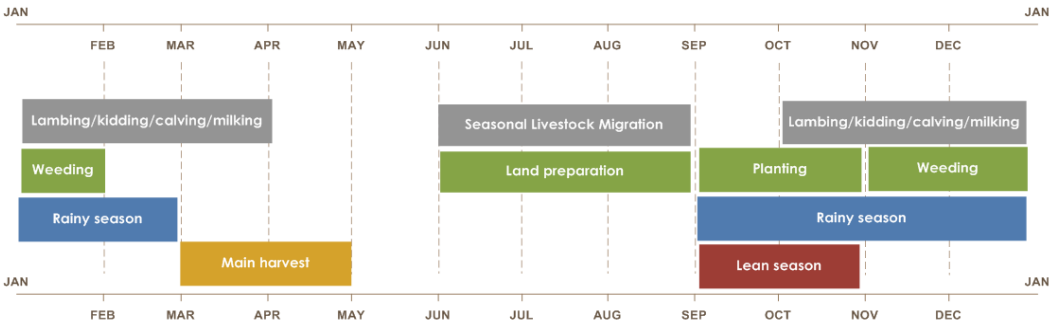
- Local authorities expressed concern about the food insecurity of the Khoisan communities, a small minority in the province, since they do not grow crops or produce livestock. However, the Khoisan are nomadic hunter-gatherers well adapted to the climate and, therefore, relatively more resilient to drought.

- Poor households are consistently receiving full rations of food assistance from the Government, and the series of convenience-selected[3] MUAC measurement on children under-five showed that all children were healthy. No unusual disease outbreaks had been reported to the health authorities.

As a result of the assistance and several other mitigating factors in Cuando Cubango, at least 80 percent of the population in the most drought-affected municipalities are considered to be facing Minimal (IPC Phase 1!) acute food insecurity in October. These conditions are likely to continue through the end of the lean season in February/March.

[3] A non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their proximity and accessibility to the researcher.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR: SOUTHERN LIVESTOCK, MILLET, AND SORGHUM LIVELIHOOD ZONE



Source: *FEWS NET*