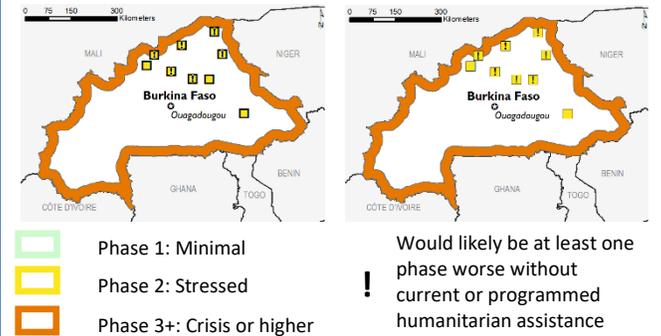


Insecurity and restrictive COVID-19 measures increase need for assistance in the country

KEY MESSAGES

- The security situation is continuing to deteriorate and increase the number of displaced persons. In areas where there are high numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs), depletion of host household stocks, declining income and limited aid coverage mean that poor people in the provinces of Bam, Namentenga, Séno, Oudalan, Yagha and Loroum are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Due to the availability of aid, the situation for IDPs and host households in the provinces of Soum and Sanmatenga is Stressed (IPC Phase 2!).
- The COVID-19 response is having a negative impact on the economy as a whole and poses a risk to the country’s supplies, especially of imported rice, in the coming months. While limiting seasonal migration and promoting the availability of labor, insecurity in the northern half of the country poses a threat to agropastoral activities and could reduce agricultural production in this region for the second consecutive season.
- Despite the social measures which are being put in place, restrictions in response to the COVID-19 crisis are negatively affecting the jobs and income of poor people, especially those in the informal sector in cities under lockdown. Maintaining or even hardening these measures could further diminish the purchasing power of poor people, limit the supply of markets and make accessing food more difficult for most people, who will then face Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

Projected food security outcomes, April to May 2020 (left) and June to September 2020 (right)

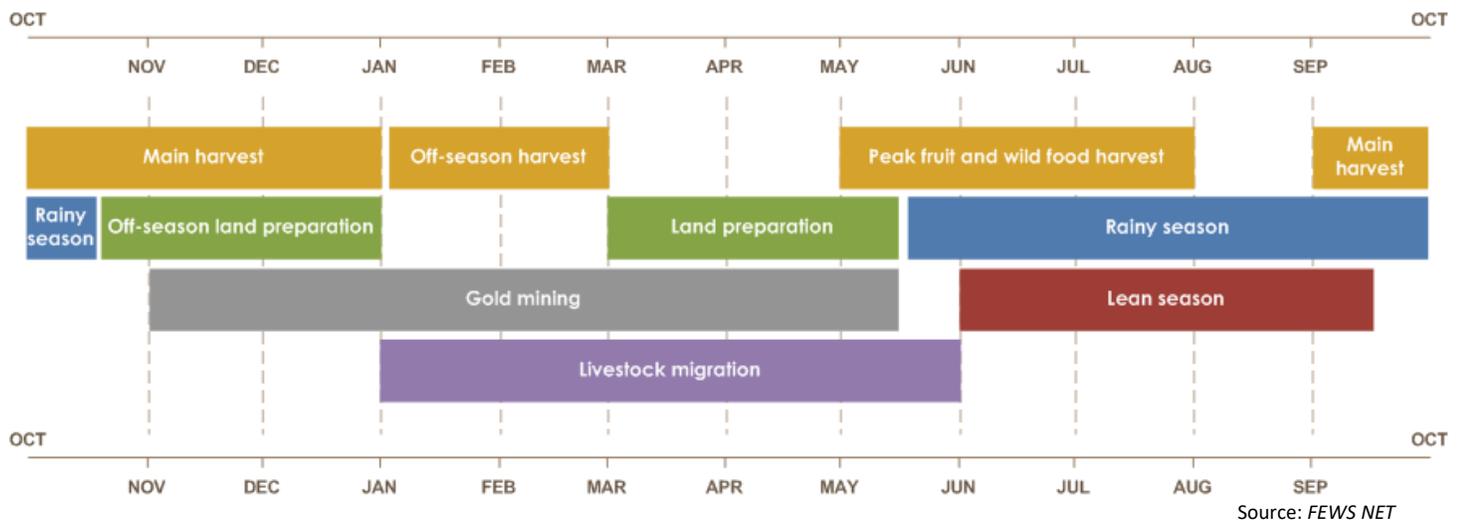


Source: FEWS NET

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 Remote Monitoring countries use a colored outline to represent the highest IPC classification in areas of concern.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

ZONE	CURRENT ANOMALIES	PROJECTED ANOMALIES
<i>National</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A worrying security situation marked by ongoing terrorist attacks and threats, resulting in an increase in the number of IDPs to 838,548 by the end of March (Burkinabe Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (CONASUR), April 2020). The health situation is also a cause for concern, given that from two confirmed COVID-19 cases on 9 March, there were 542 cases, 284 of which were active, and 32 deaths as at 15 April. Despite the social measures in place, the lockdown of affected cities, curfews, and the closure of markets, restaurants and bars are having a negative impact on the national economy and leading to income losses, especially for the urban poor working in the informal sector and also for poor people in rural areas, who depend on the markets and income from migration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The security situation will remain a matter of concern, as terrorist atrocities and threats are an almost daily occurrence. This situation is not conducive to the return of displaced persons and could adversely affect agropastoral activities for the second consecutive season. With the increase and expansion of active COVID-19 cases, maintaining or even hardening restrictive measures could further reduce the purchasing power of poor people and limit the supply of markets. Food access for poor urban households and poor people living in rural areas affected by insecurity could deteriorate pending a likely improvement with the new October harvests.
<i>Livelihood zones 8; 7; 5; 9</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A more difficult lean season in pastoral areas due to shortfalls in fodder production, restrictions on access to pasture areas as a result of insecurity and the high cost of supplementary foods (agroindustrial by-products), exacerbated by the closure of the main livestock markets as a preventative measure against the threat of COVID-19. The proportion of IDPs among the total population exceeds 20 percent in the provinces of Soum, Séno and Sanmatenga. However, compared with the beginning of February, increases of between 30 and 50 percent have been recorded in the provinces of Oudalan, Yatenga, Loroum and Namentenga. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulties with feeding livestock will continue until pastures are regenerated in mid-July. Increasing demand for agroindustrial by-products, in the face of reduced market supply, will lead to an atypical price increase. The drop in animal sales will also reduce livestock farmers' purchasing power. In addition to the insecurity that hinders adequate delivery of aid, new needs in urban centers in response to COVID-19 could contribute to a reduction in assistance provided to displaced persons and host households, thus prompting them to adopt harmful worst-case crisis strategies with regard to consumption and livelihoods.

PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2020

At the national level

Despite declines in the northern half of the country due to insecurity, final cereal production at the national level remains almost 10 percent above the five-year average. Stockpiles carried forward and reconstituted from wholesalers and producer unions reached 70,500 tons of local cereals (*Comité Interprofessionnel des Céréales du Burkina Faso* [Burkina Faso Interprofessional Cereals Committee – CICB], April 2020), more than 40 percent above their average level and resulting in satisfactory market availability.

When restrictive measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic were introduced, the availability of other staple foods was also satisfactory. Oil and sugar stocks were higher than consumption requirements for the next three months. By contrast, stocks of rice were 11 percent lower (WFP/Ministry of Trade, April 2020).

Thus, in the markets, the prices of rice and oil (government-controlled foods) were stable. Prices of local cereals remained generally slightly down compared with the five-year average: by 12 percent for maize, 9 percent for millet and 10 percent for sorghum.

However, since the beginning of April, the suspension of interurban transport and the lockdown of cities (15 in total) which have recorded confirmed COVID-19 cases have had an adverse effect on the flow of goods to the interior of the country due to the reduction in the number of haulers and road harassment. In addition, small-scale traders in rural areas using public transport and tricycle transportation have seen a slowdown in their activity. Furthermore, according to the advocacy note produced by the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) Food Security Subgroup, the slowdown in international shipping could lead to longer delays in the supply of imported goods. For Burkina Faso, shortages in the supply of imported rice could become more apparent during the second half of the year.

However, food distribution to vulnerable people in cities (5,000 metric tons of cereals) and the opening of 150 subsidized cereal sales outlets (25,000 metric tons) across the country will help maintain availability and price stability. However, the number of beneficiaries of these distribution efforts remains low and losses of income mean that not all poor people will be able to access sales outlets. In February 2016, the Food Insecurity in Urban Areas Survey (SAP – the national early warning system, 2016) showed that almost 7.5 percent of households in the two main cities (Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso) were experiencing severe food insecurity and that 61 percent of household expenditure was on food. The loss of employment and income likely increased the proportion of households exposed to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of food insecurity.

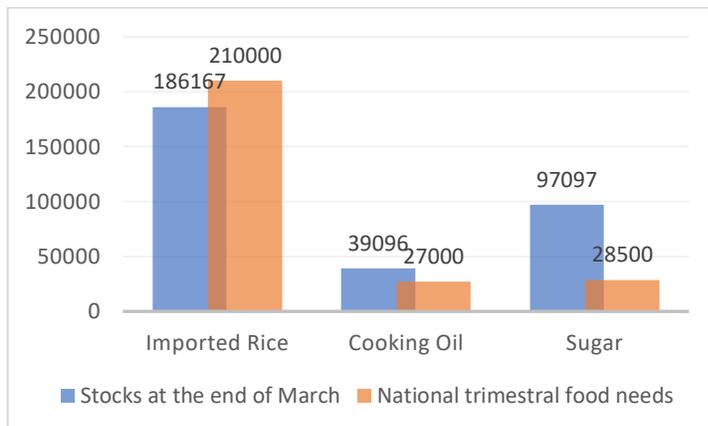
People in semi-urban areas who usually rely on small-scale trade with the city (sale of market garden produce, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), wood and charcoal, poultry, etc.) are directly affected by the lockdown measures because of declining demand, which has an adverse impact on their income. In rural areas, the closure of the main livestock markets has forced livestock farmers to sell off their animals to local traders who buy at low prices; the main buyers from coastal countries are absent. In addition, border closures and the suspension of public transport is hampering migration to large urban centers and coastal countries. This will reduce the cash transfers that help households to buy food during the lean season and to procure agricultural production supplies.

Overall, a decline in incomes is reducing the purchasing power of poor households, meaning they have less access to food. Until September, this population group is expected to remain exposed to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of acute food insecurity due to the deteriorating economic situation in the country and generally high prices over the coming months.

Livelihood zones 8; 7; 5; 9

The Sahel, Centre-Nord, Nord and Est regions are most affected by terrorist threats and attacks. March in particular recorded the highest number of killings (405) since January 2019, 75 percent of which occurred in the provinces of Soum and Oudalan in the Sahel region. The number of IDPs in these regions continues to rise, and they account for over 20 percent of the total population in the provinces of Soum, Séno and Sanmatenga.

Figure 1. Stock levels compared with consumption requirements (metric tons)



Source: World Food Programme (WFP)/Ministry of Trade

In these areas, the national survey carried out in January by the Ministry of Agriculture's Statistics Department indicated that households had stocks to meet needs of two to three months on average. In other words, these stocks are likely to be depleted early in March, compared with May–June in a normal year.

In the main markets, cereal supplies remained satisfactory in March and prices were stable or between 10 and 20 percent lower than average, with the exception of a 10 percent increase in the markets of Gayéri (Est) and Arbinda (Sahel). However, since April, the closure of markets and the slowdown in inflows of goods (reduction in transport) have resulted in price increases beyond seasonal variations. In the Djibo market, for example, the prices of millet and fodder rose by 10 percent and 13 percent respectively in mid-April, compared with levels when restrictive measures were first introduced. Millet prices remain in line with the five-year average, but prices for fodder have increased by 23 percent.

In addition to the insecurity that had already limited producers' access to the usual market garden production sites, where activity has been possible, producers have found it difficult to sell their produce. Ongoing terrorist threats and the COVID-19 health crisis have prevented purchasers from collecting produce, especially usual customers from coastal countries. As a result, prices for onions and tomatoes have fallen by between 15 and 30 percent.

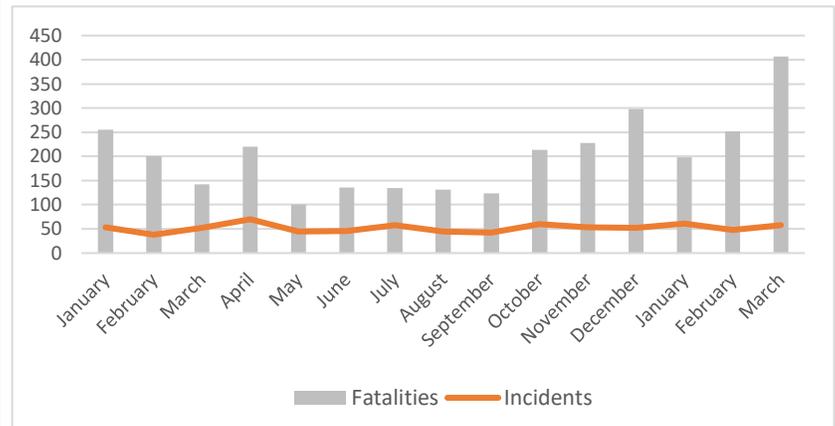
Gold mining, which in normal years has been the leading source of income for 20 to 30 percent of households, now remains so for only 10 to 15 percent. As a result of the loss of this source of income, there has been an increase in the sale of livestock as a source of income in the Centre-Nord region, from 26 percent in a normal year to 33 percent. This increase in livestock sales comes at a time when the main markets are closed. By March, before the closure, prices had already fallen by about 16 percent on the Dori market and 6 percent on the Djibo market. Nevertheless, the terms of trade for goats and millet remain favorable to livestock farmers and are stable compared with the average. With the closure of the main markets and declining demand due to the absence of foreign buyers, livestock farmers have been forced to sell off their animals to local traders at low prices.

In addition, during this lean season, livestock farmers need to purchase supplementary food (agroindustrial by-products) at prices which are 20 to 30 percent more expensive than normal. With limited supplies, speculative practices will lead to even higher prices and further reduce their purchasing power.

Food assistance provided over the past two months has reached at least 20 percent of households in provinces where there are high numbers of IDPs (Soum and Sanmatenga) and is helping to keep levels of acute food insecurity at Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) in these provinces. On the other hand, coverage remains low in the provinces of Séno, Oudalan, Yagha (Sahel), Namentenga, Bam (Centre-Nord) and Loroum (Nord), where poor host households and IDPs remain at risk of Crisis (IPC Phase 3). The coverage of planned assistance (provided mainly by WFP) for April and May is similar to the previous two months.

Insecurity poses a threat to agricultural and livelihood activities in this part of the country. Fodder purchases will continue to weaken farmers' purchasing power until pastures are regenerated from mid-July. New needs in urban centers in response to COVID-19 and restrictions on people's movement could lead to reduced assistance for displaced persons and host households, prompting them to adopt harmful worst-case crisis strategies with regard to consumption and livelihoods until September. Insecurity means that, on average, 75 percent of planned assistance is usually delivered. The additional impact of restrictions on movement meant that this was reduced to 63 percent in March.

Figure 2. Security incidents and fatalities from January 2019 to March 2020



Source: FEWS NET/Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) data

ABOUT REMOTE MONITORING

In remote monitoring, a coordinator typically works from a nearby regional office. Relying on partners for data, the coordinator uses scenario development to conduct analysis and produce monthly reports. As less data may be available, remote monitoring reports may have less detail than those from countries with FEWS NET offices. Learn more [here](#).