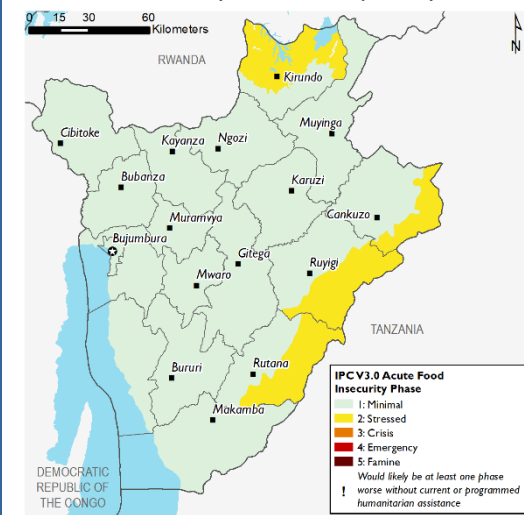


Delayed 2021 A Season harvest contributed to less severe April lean period

KEY MESSAGES

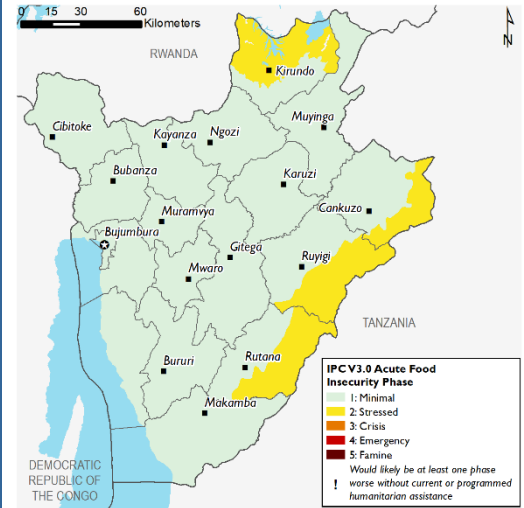
- 2021 A Season crop production, estimated to be above average for maize, tubers, and bananas, improved rural household food access, and is supporting Minimal (IPC Phase 1) outcomes among households across most of the country. However, poor and very poor households in the Northern and Eastern Lowland livelihood zones are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security outcomes due to below-average 2021 A crop production affected by dry conditions in October and November 2020 and reduced cross-border income-earning sources, related to COVID-19.
- USGS forecasts indicate average to above-average rainfall in late April and May. While favorable to cereals (maize, rice, and sorghum), tubers (sweet potatoes and cassava) and banana, elevated soil moisture is expected to reduce the 2021 B Season bean production to below average as the crop is particularly sensitive to moisture shocks.
- According to the Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of Burundi, overall annual inflation stands at 7.5 percent, largely unchanged from January 2021. The increased rate of inflation is driven by food price increases, which recorded an increase of 12.3 percent between January and March 2021. The consumer price index is 6.1 percent for the month of February 2021 against an increase of 6.5 percent in January 2021.
- Due to the limited income earning opportunities around camps, refugees will face Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) food security outcomes until May 2021. WFP also assisted 16,715 IDPs affected by flooding in the Imbo Plains with 360g of cereals, 120g of pulses, 25g of oil and 5g of salt per person per day, resulting in None! (IPC Phase 1!) food security outcomes for the population.

Current food security outcomes, April-May 2021



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2021



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.

CURRENT SITUATION

Food availability and access improved in March and April following the 2021 A Season crop harvest, estimated to be above average for cereals, tubers, and bananas; though below average for beans, according to results from the (Enquête Nationale Agricole du Burundi (ENAB), March 2021. The late start of the 2021 A Season delayed the crop harvest by one month, occurring at the end of March and therefore improving food access in April. This crop production is expected to cover food needs of most households through the April to May lean period of April and May.

Improved food access was highlighted by the March 2021 WFP/FSMS, with nearly 80 percent of households, nationally, reporting an acceptable food consumption score (FCS), compared to 70 percent of the population with an acceptable FCS in the October 2020 SMART survey. Thus, food access mainly from 2021 A Season crop production allowed poor and very poor households across the country to meet basic food needs through June 2021, expected for the harvest period of the 2021 B Season.

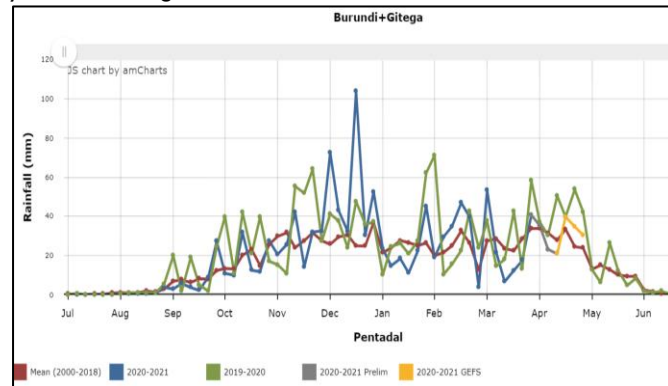
However, the general improvement of food access remains weak for poor and very poor households in the Northern and Eastern Lowland livelihood zones; impacted by both localized dryness at the end of 2020 and the economic implications of COVID-19 restrictions. 2021 A Season crop production significantly reduced due to localized November 2020 dryness in the Northern Lowlands livelihood zone. Poor and very poor household income sources from cross-border opportunities in both zones remain significantly reduced due to the COVID-19 related border closure, while alternative livelihood strategies are very limited.

The below-average rainfall during the two first weeks of March delayed 2021 B Season planting by two weeks for 15 to 20 percent of crops, nationally, according to key informants. Planting occurred in April rather than the end of March and crops are expected to be exposed to the end of the rainy season, expected in mid-May, before maturation. Bean crops, mainly cultivated in B season, are especially sensitive to water stress are the most at risk.

Despite a favorable 2021 Season A crop harvest, staple food prices are generally high, about 18 percent above the five-year average for maize, tubers, and beans. The high price of maize is driven by the decision of the government to fix maize producer prices at 680 BFI/kg. Above-average maize prices are secondarily due to a phytosanitary ban of maize imports from Tanzania and Uganda. The impact of the maize import ban is not particularly significant during the harvest and post-harvest period, while domestic food stocks are not yet exhausted.

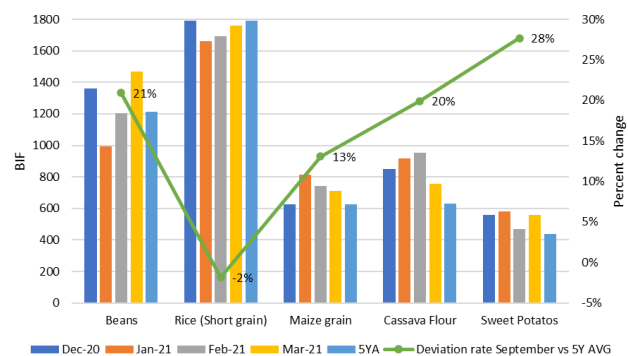
In addition, 28,000 returnees who arrived between September 2020 and January 2021, who have exhausted their three months of assistance and didn't cultivate 2021 A Season are also facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security outcomes. More than 80 percent of the returnees are located in the Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone. However, 22,000 Burundian returnees received food assistance totaling 1,600 MT, provided at the transit centers, as a three-month return package consisting of cereals, pulses, vegetable oil, and salt to facilitate reintegration into their communities. This population is facing None! (IPC Phase 1!) outcomes. Similarly, 16,715 flooding IDPs located in the Imbo Plains (Mutimbuzi commune of Bujumbura Rural province, Rumonge commune in Rumonge Province, and Nyanza-Lac commune of Makamba province) that are being assisted by WFP and the 49,868 refugees hosted in five camps are facing None! (IPC Phase 1!) food security outcomes.

Figure 1. Rainfall (mm) in Gitega province, compared to previous years and average



Source : USGS

Figure 2. Staple food price variation in Eastern Lowlands livelihood zone



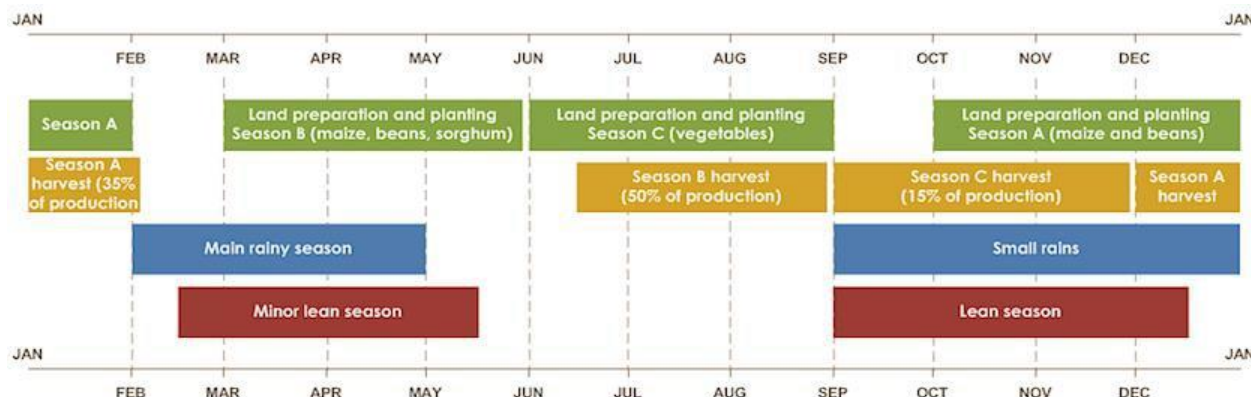
Source: WFP

UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The assumptions used to develop FEWS NET’s most likely scenario discussed in the February 2021 to September 2021 Food Security Outlook Report remain unchanged.

- Above-average to average rainfall is forecasted by USGS in late-April and May and cumulative rainfall during the February-May long rains season is most likely to conclude at near-average levels. Though it is favourable for other crops, the excessive rainfall is expected to drop below average beans crop production of 2021 B Season, bean crop is particularly sensitive rainfall shocks, excessive and/or deficit. The cessation of rainfall at the end of May is expected to stress the maturity of near 20 percent of beans crops from delay plantations of near 1 month, according to key informants. A normal dry period is expected during June to September, allowing for a typical 2021 C Season.
- In addition to seasonal trends, maize prices will be influenced by the political decision of fixing producer prices at 680 BFI/kg and the ban of regional imports for a period of six months beginning in March. The ban of maize imports will reduce availability until July, when 2021 A maize stocks will be exhausted while the import ban remains in place. Expected below-average maize supplies on markets will lead to above average maize prices through September.
- The Ministry of Health has confirmed a resurgence of COVID-19 cases since January. COVID-19 active cases increased in April by 250, 108 and 45 percent from January, February and March respectively. This upward trend in cases led the government to extend measures strictly restricting cross-border movements through the period of analysis. This measure will deprive poor and very poor households of access to cross-border opportunities composed by agriculture labor and petty trade through the period of analysis, then reduces income resources of the weak wealth groups.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates the FEWS NET’s Food Security Outlook