HAITI Food Security Outlook — February to September 2020

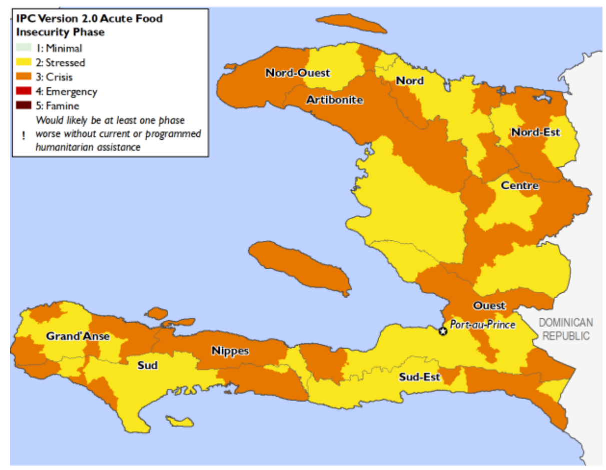
Food insecurity in Crisis during lean season

KEY MESSAGES

- Despite the resumption of most economic activities to near normal levels, the socio-political climate remains unpredictable and fragile. The operating environment of the Parliament and insecurity, among other factors, creates uncertainty, which still risks disrupting the calm observed for more than three months. In the event of renewed civil unrest, similar to that seen in 2019, household access to food and income would be more significant impacted. However, based on recent calm, broad stability is expected through at least September.

- Rainfall deficits during the 2019 second rainy season contribute to lower than average yields of the currently harvested winter bean season in the Nord-Est, Nord, Nippes, Nord-Ouest, and in some municipalities in Ouest departments. However, the harvest is closer to average in the Greater South of the country (with the exception of Nippes) and Artibonite, where beans, maize, peanuts, rice and market garden produce are currently being harvested, in addition to the harvest of bananas and roots. The availability of these foods is driving some improvements in food security.

Current food security outcomes, February 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

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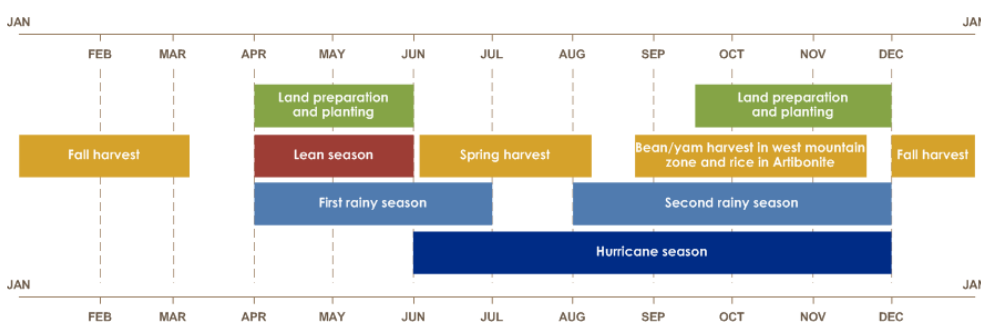
- Despite these improvements, high prices of basic food products, persistently low employment opportunities, and the negative effects of the socio-political crisis more broadly are all negatively impacting many poor households' ability to sufficiently access their food and non-food needs. In areas of greatest concern, including those in which production is likely to be below average and income-earning opportunities are low, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are anticipated through September 2020.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: *FEWS NET*

FEWS NET Haiti
fewsinquiry.haiti@fews.net
www.fews.net/haiti

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current Situation

Socio-political context: Since the second half of November, economic activity has returned to normal, with the exception of the hotel industry. Transport, trade, schooling and public administration have resumed. However, developments remain unpredictable.

In addition, the operating environment of the Parliament and insecurity, among other issues, are creating uncertainty, which could jeopardize the apparent calm observed for over three months.

The situation is particularly worrying in and around the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, where there has been a wave of kidnappings since the beginning of the year. In addition, a protest movement started around two weeks ago by Haitian national police officers is manifesting in confrontations, sometimes violent, between the national police and the Haitian armed forces.

Climate conditions and outlook: Cumulative rainfall over the month of January was around average overall, but with irregular temporal and geographical distribution. At the beginning of February, however, rainfall was below normal levels. In some regions, such as Nippes, Centre, Nord-Ouest and Ouest, the early end to the rains in late January is delaying land preparation activities, which normally start in January and February in preparation for spring planting in March and April.

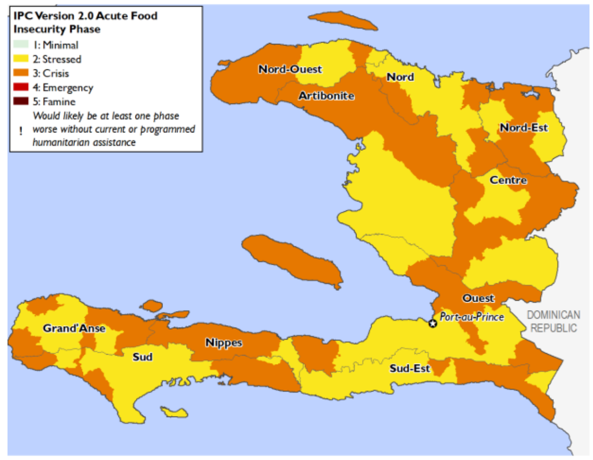
Impact on seasonal crop production: Except for irrigated plains and semi-humid mountain areas, the temporal and geographical irregularity of rainfall has disrupted current crops, negatively affected the performance of the winter harvest, and delayed land preparation activities for the spring season.

Urban and regional markets: With the exception of Croix-des-Bossales market, which is operating on a limited basis, markets are continuing to function normally and are well supplied, mostly with imported produce, and well-stocked. Large distribution centers for imported food products are also well-stocked.

There is low availability of local foods, apart from yams and bananas, due to poor fall and winter harvests in some parts of the country.

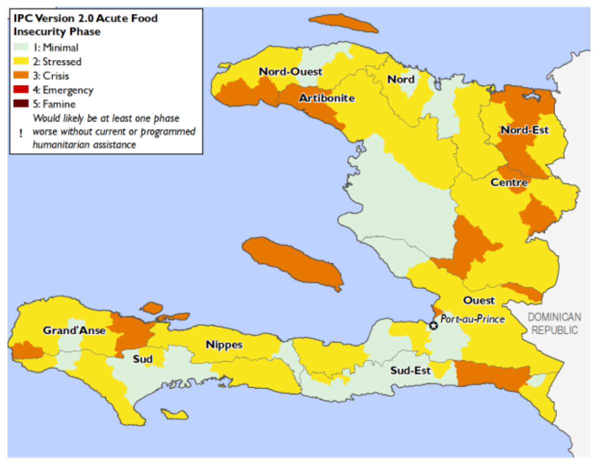
Price trends: Food prices remained relatively stable in January and February. The price of imported rice fell between November and January, despite a volatile world price trend (OSIRIZ report no. 191, January 2020). There was an average fall of almost 5 percent at the national level, with a 6 lb pot (*marmite*) of rice selling for around 270 gourdes, compared with 283 gourdes in December. Further reductions are expected in February.

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2020



Source: *FEWS NET*

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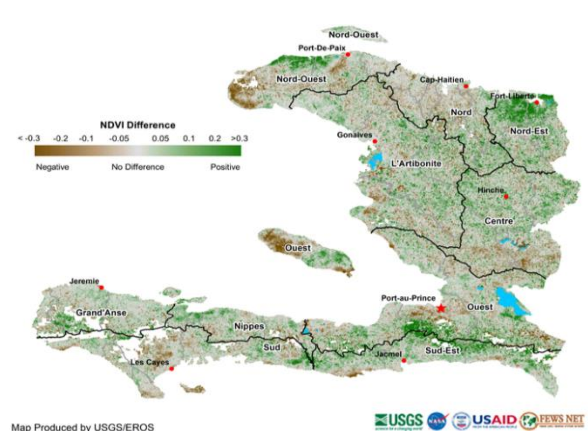
Figure 1. Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) anomaly, 1 to 10 February 2020 (2020 vs 2019)



Source: *FEWS NET/United States Geological Survey (USGS)*

According to FEWS NET sources, this situation is due to the improved movement of goods across the country. Food products, including rice, can now reach all departments.

Prices for local grain maize and black beans remain relatively stable, with slight downward fluctuations. A 6 lb pot of local grain maize is still selling for around 148 gourdes, and of black beans for around 491 gourdes.

Meanwhile, as in December, prices remain stable for most imported staple foods, in particular cooking oil, peas (all varieties) and wheat flour. This trend could be explained by the fact that products can now reach all destination zones, and that wholesalers and some retailers have been able to build up stocks, unlike in previous months.

Nevertheless, prices have not yet returned to their pre-crisis levels. For example, the price of maize is 21 percent higher than last year, and 60 percent higher than the five-year average. The price of beans is 40 percent higher than the previous year, and 70 percent higher than the five-year average.

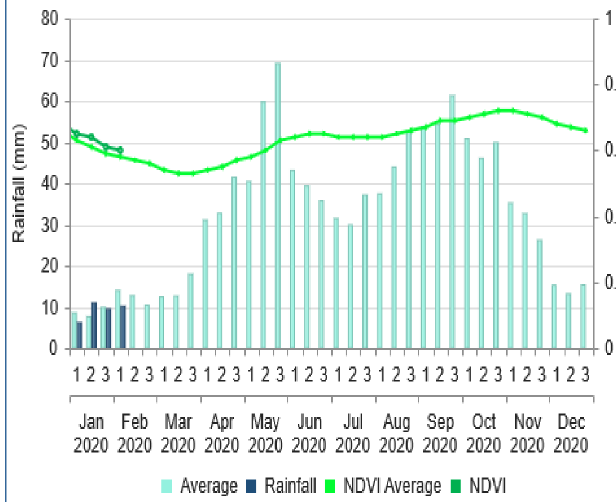
Livestock: The current situation for livestock farming, particularly for cattle and goats, has slightly improved compared with previous months, due to the availability of fodder and water. However, some species, especially pigs and poultry, continue to be affected by Teschen and Newcastle disease in rural areas. The prevalence of these diseases is posing a serious threat to households who use livestock as a means of saving for occasional expenditure.

Supply and demand for agricultural labor: Current agricultural activities are dominated by winter harvests and preparations for the spring season in areas that have received favorable rainfall. In some places, land preparation activities are under way for the spring season, while awaiting the next rainy season. Workers are therefore being recruited for these activities, although the peak demand for labor is expected from March. This demand for labor is slightly below average, as there is lower production from the winter season.

Other sources of income: Currently, the most effective sources of income for poor and poorest households are small-scale trade or self-employment, given the slowdown in agricultural activities. These income sources are generally close to average. One-off “cash-for-work” activities have also been observed, in relation to restoration of the drinking water supply system or construction of particular sections of roads, but these apply in only a limited number of communes. In border zones, migration to the Dominican Republic provides a significant source of income.

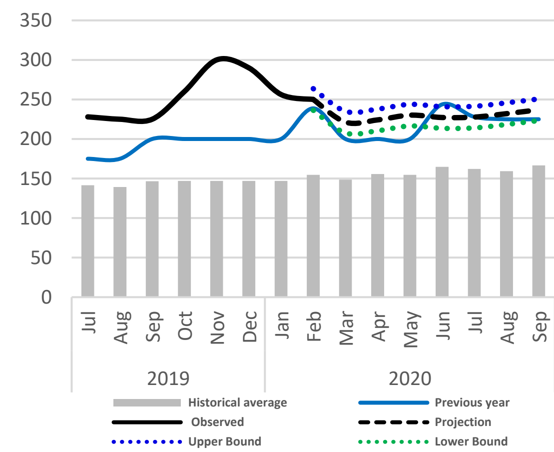
In terms of **malnutrition**, the preliminary findings of the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey conducted last January by the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP), with the support of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), revealed a national increase in cases of malnutrition (weight-for-height) compared with the Mortality, Morbidity and Service Utilization Survey (EMMUS) survey in 2016/2017. There is now 6 percent prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM). At the department level, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) ranges from 0 percent (Nippes) to 1.3 percent (Nord-Est). However, the situation is more serious in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, where there is 6.5 percent prevalence of GAM and 2.5 percent prevalence of SAM.

Figure 2. Haiti: Rainfall trends in mm and NDVI 2020



Source: *World Food Programme Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (WFP-VAM) Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station data (CHIRPS)/ Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS)*

Figure 3. Port-au-Prince, observed and projected prices of imported rice (4 percent broken rice) (HTG/6 lbs)



Source: *FEWS NET/National Food Security Coordination Agency (CNSA)*

Impact on food security: Food security outcomes continue to suffer the residual effects of the socio-political crisis. While food is available in most markets, income sources remain disrupted as a result of socio-political unrest and inflation.

In some zones, where there is greater diversity in sources of food and income, such as Grand'Anse (excluding coastal zones), Sud, Sud-Est (excluding Belle-Anse), Bas Plateau Central and Bas Artibonite, households are using stress strategies to access food. These include reducing non-essential expenditure, increasing food purchases on credit, extending the migration period, or consuming less preferred food. These zones are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity.

In other zones that are more vulnerable to price shocks or drought, such as Nord-Est, Nord-Ouest, lowland communes in Nippes, and some communes in Ouest (e.g. Gonave), households are using crisis strategies, such as increasing sales of charcoal or removing children from school. Given the importance attached to children's education, especially among poor households, the reduction in this expenditure in favor of food expenditure is an indicator of significant deterioration in the situation. Also, although the cutting of wood to make charcoal is a normal activity in several zones of the country, it constitutes a strategy when it is dramatically increased. These areas are therefore in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for February to September 2020 is based on the following assumptions at the national level.

- **Socio-political situation:** The socio-political situation means there is a high likelihood of seeing further disruptions comparable to those in September and October. This would negatively affect the movement of food products and individuals, with negative consequences for food security outcomes (availability, accessibility and use). However, as with the disturbances observed in September and October, these impacts would be mostly temporary, especially with regard to the movement of products. The long-term economic crisis, which is having an impact on inflation and thus on access to food, is fully taken into account in the most likely scenario for this outlook report. The emergence of new socio-political disturbances and their temporary impact are included in the table of events that might change the most likely scenario.

- **El Niño–Southern Oscillation conditions and weather forecasts:** According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the most likely scenario for February to September 2020 indicates neutral El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions.

- **Agricultural production and gathering**

    - Winter season: Winter season harvests are expected to be below average in most regions, as crops were affected by water shortages during the flowering period.

    - Spring and summer season: Good rainfall conditions are expected to support spring and summer harvests. However, due to the impact of low production from previous seasons on farmers' ability to finance these activities (e.g. payment for labor, purchase of seeds), performance could be slightly below average in some places.

    - Rice: There will be continuous harvesting of the crop in irrigated zones. Production is expected to be close to average.

    - Bananas and tubers: Production of bananas and tubers is expected to be close to average during the outlook period.

    - Mangoes: Mango production is expected to be normal between March and July.

- **Income sources**

    - Agricultural labor: Based on the assumption of a normal first rainy season and normal progress of the spring season, the availability of labor opportunities is expected to be close to average. Given that there has been little increase in payment for labor over recent years, income is also expected to be close to average.

    - Sales of charcoal: Given the rise in food prices, sales of charcoal are expected to be higher than in other years to compensate for this increase. They are thus expected to be above average.

  - Migration to cities and to the Dominican Republic: Migration to the Dominican Republic is expected to be at a normal level. In Haut Plateau Central, Nord-Est and Sud-Est, which are much closer to the agricultural zones on the border with the Dominican Republic, migration is usually higher than in the rest of the country.

  - Sales of agricultural produce: Income from agricultural sales is expected to be close to average from June onwards.

- **General price trends**

  - Prices for imported food will remain high, due to the level of depreciation of the gourde against the dollar.

  - For some local products, particularly maize and beans, prices may fall until March, because of the winter harvests expected to supply markets in the coming weeks.

  - Food prices are still expected to remain higher than the pre-crisis period, last year (except for imported rice) and the five-year average.

- Other assumptions

  - Market supply: The stability in market supply is dependent on the socio-political stability, which remains fragile and would be disrupted in the event of prolonged riots (see table of events that might change the scenario). In the long-term, however, markets are expected to be regularly supplied with imported products during the outlook period. Local produce will be available in March (from winter crops) and from the end of June (spring season). In addition, bananas and tubers should supply the markets throughout the period, and mangoes should appear from April or May.

  - Dollar and peso exchange rates: The gourde exchange rate against the United States dollar and the peso is expected to continue to increase, as it did at the beginning of 2019 and has done since January 2020. The political instability is one of the determining factors in the depreciation of the gourde. Thus, the benchmark exchange rate could reach 100 gourdes during the outlook period. This is unless the monetary authorities intervene by injecting United States currency into the interbank exchange market, as happened last year.

  - General inflation: The annual inflation rate is expected to be around 20.1 percent, according to projections by the Haitian Central Bank (BRH) for the second quarter of 2019–2020 (January–March).

  - Foreign remittances: Remittances from the Haitian diaspora are expected to increase throughout the outlook period, especially in August and September when classes restart.

  - Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate: According to World Bank forecasts in the latest edition of the Global Economic Prospects, the Haitian economy is expected to see a negative rate of growth of 1.4 percent in 2020. This would entail a high level of unemployment during the scenario period.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The first period of the scenario **(February to May)** coincides with the harvest period for the winter season, which contributes very little to total annual production. It includes beans and maize in irrigated plains and humid mountain areas, roots, tubers and bananas. This period also coincides with the lean season, which sees a reduction in local food as a share of total food consumption, and the depletion of household stocks. Households are expected to turn to markets for more of their supply, at a time when prices for staple products are higher and income is limited. This would affect the purchasing power of the poorest people, thus reducing their economic access to these products.

In these circumstances, the poorest households will continue to use coping strategies to meet their food needs. There may therefore be an increase in the number of food insecure households during the lean season. Most zones of the country will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity.

The second period of the scenario **(June–September)** coincides with the spring harvests and also with the beginning of the summer/fall season. Based on the favorable agro-climatic forecasts, these harvests are expected to be more productive than last year. Greater availability of local produce such as beans, maize, rice and wild produce (bananas, breadfruit, etc.) should therefore help to improve food security for the poorest households. The increased availability of local produce compared with the first period is likely to have a downward effect on the prices of staple foods, even for imported produce, widening access to staple foods. There is expected to be a slight increase in own production as a source of food, compared with the first period of the scenario, although purchases will remain significant.

Given the outlook for a normal spring season, and then summer season (with employment of agricultural labor), there may be a slight improvement in livelihoods during the second period of the outlook, with households using less crisis or stress strategies. Thus, zones previously in Crisis (see maps for February–May and June–September) may be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) during the period. However, most communes in Nord-Est, where livelihoods have been severely affected by various shocks for two consecutive years, will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Events that Might Change the Outlook

Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario

Area	Events	Impact on food security outcomes
National	Increased socio-political unrest	The escalation of violence would likely disrupt the current functioning of the economy and markets. This would lead to a decrease in food availability and access, forcing more households to adopt negative coping strategies. As certain coping strategies are depleted, food consumption deficits could appear. Thus, more areas and households could be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
National	Substantial improvement in the socio-political situation	The potential for socio-political stability, with the establishment of a consensus government, could strengthen trade flows and market supplies. Sources of income should also return to normal. This would reduce the number of people and areas in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).
Production zones	Early end to rains	An abrupt end to the rainy season at a critical phase of development for spring crops (rice, maize, beans) and at the beginning of the summer season could lead to significant crop losses and damage to the livelihoods of the poorest households. This would increase the number of people and areas in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

AREA OF CONCERN

Nord-Est, zone HT02

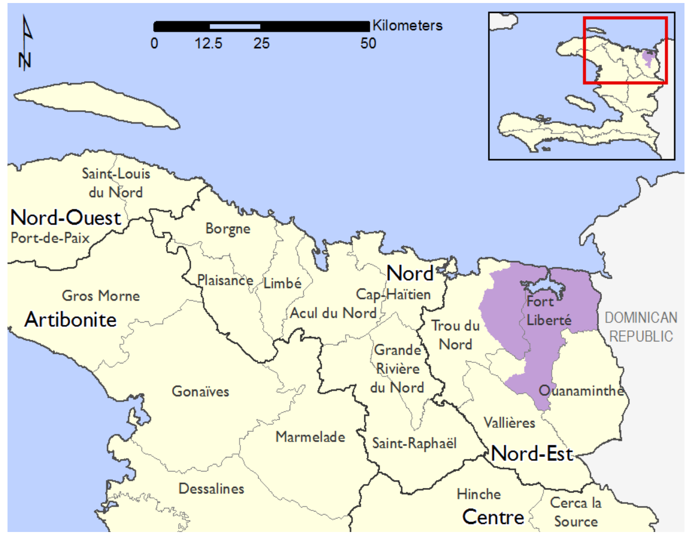
Current Situation

Seasonal progress: Despite a good start to the winter growing season, reduced rainfall in early January caused yellowing leaves in beans, the main winter season crop. The current situation indicates that harvests will be below average.

Product availability and food consumption: The current main sources of food for the very poor are market purchases or food donations, and to a lesser extent their own production from fall and winter harvests. Markets are relatively well supplied with local and imported produce. Stocks include small quantities of pigeon peas. In irrigated areas, especially the Maribahoux plain (Ouanaminthe and Ferrier), there are some stocks of rice. Sources of food donations include neighbors, food programs and family members.

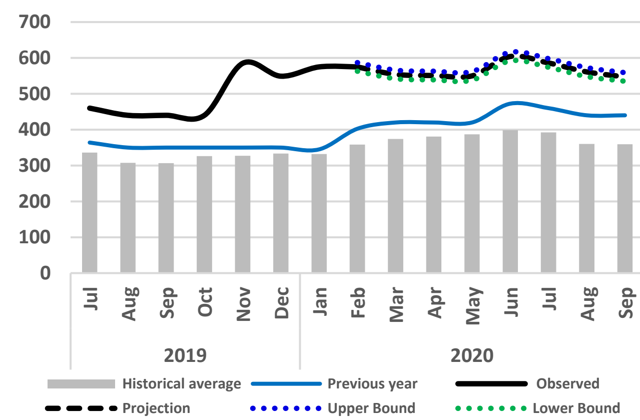
Current food security outcomes remain more or less stable compared with the situation in August 2019. For example, there is very little diversification in the food consumption of the very poor, which is mostly limited to foods of low nutritional value, consisting mainly of cereals and tubers, and rarely vegetables or meat.

Figure 4. Map of area of concern HT02 – Nord-Est



Source: *FEWS NET*

Figure 5. Ouanaminthe: observed and projected prices for local black beans (HTG/6lbs)



Source: *FEWS NET/CNSA*

The very poor consume on average one meal a day, just before going to bed. On average, they consume two small pots of rice per day (545.45 g/pot) for an average family of five to seven people.

Nutritional situation: According to the findings of the SMART survey carried out in January 2020 by the MSPP, there is an increase in GAM compared with the EMMUS survey carried out in Nord-Est in 2016/2017. Prevalence of GAM among children aged 6–59 months, by weight/height index, was 1.5 percent according to EMMUS, but has risen to 5.4 percent. In addition, of the 10 departments in the country, Nord-Est has the highest prevalence of SAM, at 1.3 percent.

Livestock: Unlike the same period of the previous year, there is feed available for livestock, due to the rains enabling regrowth of fodder. Animals are therefore in normal physical condition. It should be noted that the very poor own very few animals. They have a few goats, usually as a result of minding them for others. Herd sizes are slightly higher than last year, when they were seriously impacted by drought.

Markets and price trends: Markets are relatively well supplied, with products from this area, the Dominican Republic and elsewhere. However, high and rising prices are making it difficult to access them, especially for the very poor. The prices of the main staple foods, particularly beans, rice and maize, are above last year's prices and their five-year average (see figure opposite).

Income sources: The main sources of income for the very poor are sale of labor (especially for those close to the Haitian–Dominican border), sales of agricultural production (pigeon peas, rice, maize and bananas), sales of wood/charcoal, and small-scale informal trade. Those living in border areas migrate temporarily to the Dominican Republic to sell their labor. In coastal areas such as Caracole or Fort-Liberté, the sale of fish products enables some fishing households to access some of their food. Small-scale trade, especially with neighboring Dominican Republic, is still practiced by a large number of households, and women in particular. Taxi-motorbike is another activity that is becoming increasingly popular among young people in the region. The poorest have no motorbikes but rent them, sometimes with a purchase agreement after six months.

Humanitarian assistance: Under a program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by World Vision and the Center for the Promotion of Breastfeeding (CEPAM), approximately 4,000 families in six communes in Nord-Est have been receiving food coupons worth USD 50 per month since May 2019. Using their coupon, beneficiaries can purchase a 25 kg bag of rice, one gallon of oil, three 6 lb pots of flour, one pot of beans, one pot of maize, and a 6.7 kg sachet of spaghetti from traders pre-selected by the program.

Population coverage is estimated at less than 5 percent, and coverage of the food needs of the households receiving assistance is estimated at about 60 percent (CEPAM, 2020).

Current food security outcomes: The poorest households are adopting crisis strategies to maintain their basic food consumption. Strategies include early/unusual food consumption, seed consumption and reduction of non-food expenditure (stressed), as well as reduced meal size, prioritization of feeding children over adults, and reduced spending on health and education (crisis). A very small number of households living in extreme poverty are using begging, among other strategies. The area is thus in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Assumptions

In addition to the assumptions at the national level, the most likely scenario for this zone from February to September 2020 is based on the following assumptions:

- Spring harvests are expected to be average to slightly below average.
- The June/July rice harvest in irrigated areas, especially Maribahoux, is expected to be close to average.
- Mangoes are particularly important in Nord-Est. Between May and July, mango production is expected to be close to average.
- Income from migration is likely to be average to above average.
- No tensions are expected between Haiti and the Dominican Republic; cross-border trade, trade relations between the two countries, and migration to the Dominican Republic should all remain normal.
- Income from livestock sales is expected to close to the long-term average, and above its level in the previous year.
- Sales of wood and charcoal are expected to decrease at the start of the spring season, as the workforce will be engaged in plowing, planting and weeding.
- The price of black beans is likely to rise during the first period of the scenario and fall during the second period. It is expected to be above last year's price, and well above the five-year average. Prices for other products will be higher overall.

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

The first period of the scenario **(February to May)** coincides with the harvest period for the winter season, which contributes less than 25 percent to total annual production, as well as the lean season, which sees a reduction in local produce as a share of total food consumption, and the depletion of household stocks.

Rainfall projections for the spring 2020 season suggest near-average rainfall and, all other things being equal, an increase in agricultural activity and near-average nominal income from agricultural work. However, due to price rises, the very poor will have decreased purchasing power, affecting their access to the market. Livelihoods will likely be negatively affected.

Given the below-average performance of winter harvests, the depletion of scarce stocks during the lean season, the rise in prices of staple foods, and the high dependence of the poorest on markets for their food consumption, the current situation for the poorest households will continue until May 2020. They will therefore be forced to adopt the previously mentioned coping strategies, and the area will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

The second period of the scenario **(June–September)** coincides with the spring harvests and also with the beginning of the summer/fall season. There may be a slight improvement in food consumption due to the spring harvests. However, market purchases still account for a very high share of food consumption in this zone. Given the deterioration in livelihoods over two consecutive years and the high food prices, households will continue to be affected by various shocks. They will continue to adopt the previously mentioned negative coping strategies and will only be able to reduce their use of these strategies gradually. For this reason, despite a decrease in the number of people in a crisis situation, the zone will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) during part of the second period of the outlook.

Sud and Grand'Anse, HT08

Current Situation

Seasonal progress: From October to December, rainfall was very close to or even above average, with regular distribution in all communes in the Sud HT08 region, except for the commune of Tiburon. The situation was more erratic in Grand'Anse HT08 zone, where below-average rainfall was recorded, with the exception of the communes of Pestel and Corail, which show some similarities with the coastal area in Sud.

At the beginning of January, negative anomalies were observed in both previously mentioned regions, with rainfall below average. However, around the middle of the month rainfall was above average, this time showing positive anomalies. The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is therefore above average (Sud) or average (Grand'Anse).

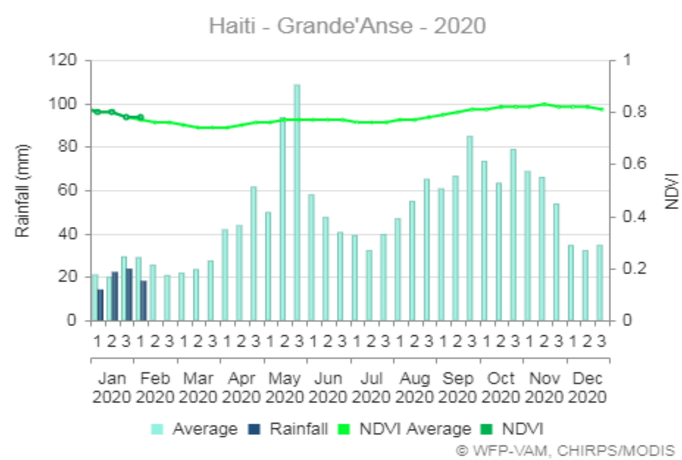
Trends in agricultural conditions: Grand'Anse: coastal area. Although rainfall was below average, its regularity and good distribution during November and late December enabled farmers to commence the winter season for beans. Crops developed normally in January and are now reaching maturity in most of the areas visited. However, in some places (e.g. Anse-d'Hainault, Chantale), the late occurrence of the north-east wind this year has affected some crops. Meanwhile, roots and tubers continue to be harvested, while the harvest of pigeon peas is coming to an end.

Sud coast. Maize, groundnuts and pigeon peas have provided near-average harvests. At the same time, bean crops are developing relatively well, particularly in Les Anglais, Port-à-Piment and the humid mountain areas of the region. Leading up to the spring 2020 season, some land preparation activities have also been observed.

Figure 6. Map of area of concern HT08 – Grand'Anse and Sud

Source: *FEWS NET*

Figure 7. Rainfall trends in mm and NDVI 2020 of Grand'Anse



Source: *WFP-VAM CHIRPS/MODIS*

Food availability and consumption: Qualitative evidence collected from respondents suggests a decrease in household availability of local food produce, due to the weak performance of successive growing seasons (summer, autumn). In Grand'Anse, subsistence crops and pulses usually provide the main food for households, though these are currently scarce, as harvests are over, except for winter beans which are now ripening. Produce such as bananas, maize and pigeon peas are much more common in Sud. For the area overall, however, food consumption is currently much more limited to rice, flour and pasta from the market. Because of high prices and low incomes due to lack of job opportunities in the area, very poor households are still limiting their consumption to one meal a day, with a significant reduction in the quality of their diet.

Markets and price trends: The markets (in Les Cayes and Jérémie) are well supplied with local produce, especially pigeon peas, bananas, roots and tubers, which are typical produce in this area. However, markets are dominated by imported food products, particularly rice, wheat flour or oil. Contrary to the September–November period, markets are functioning normally and are physically accessible, but prices remain high despite a slight downward or stable trend. For example, the price of grain maize in the reference market of Les Cayes fell significantly (by more than 33 percent) in December 2019, following significant increases between September and November during the "lockdown".

In contrast, the price of beans has shown an opposite trend, having increased significantly in the markets in Jérémie (more than 18 percent) and Les Cayes (around 10 percent). This situation is due to winter black peas not being fully available, as the crops have not yet been harvested. As for other food products (cooking oil, flour), although there has been a downward or stable trend, price levels are still high, though they have not yet reached the levels that preceded the riots. Prices remain significantly above the five-year average.

Income sources: Agriculture is the main source of income in zone HT08, followed by fishing and the sale of fish products. According to the livelihood profile, poor and very poor households derive less income from crop sales but work on the farms of more affluent households during land preparation, planting and weeding periods. They also work in the fishing sector. As they have very limited annual income, these households have to engage in small-scale trade.

Currently, the most effective source of income for poor and very poor households is small-scale trade, while awaiting spring agricultural activity. However, lower incomes are being generated for all wealth categories, especially the poorest. The latter, who are largely dependent on activities initiated by the more affluent, are receiving lower income than usual, both from agricultural activities and from small-scale trade or self-employment, in the context of the current crisis.

Livestock conditions: Goat and poultry farming are predominant among the poor and very poor. Typically, they have two to four goats, four to six hens, or one pig. At present, goats are doing very well, as water and fodder are available thanks to the rains in January. However, poultry and pigs are suffering from Newcastle and Teschen diseases, respectively. Among these animals, there is an increased number of deaths compared with last year.

Nutritional situation: According to the findings of the SMART survey carried out in January 2020 by the MSPP, there is an increase in GAM compared with the EMMUS survey carried out in Grand'Anse in 2017. Based on this survey, the prevalence of underweight in Grand'Anse is estimated at 11.7 percent, which is well below the critical threshold of 30 percent set by the World Health Organization (WHO). Nevertheless, this situation is categorized as "medium" by WHO and is therefore subject to monitoring.

Emergency humanitarian assistance: Zone HT08 receives very little humanitarian assistance. However, there are current food security interventions, mainly delivered by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Solidarités International and CARE. These projects are being implemented in Grand'Anse, in the communes of Corail and Pestel, and along the coast in Sud. CRS is distributing coupons to the poorest families, followed by a nutrition program for children and for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Solidarités International is also implementing food security projects in Anse-d'Hainault and Irois, while CARE is working in Jérémie and the commune of Roseaux.

Changes in livelihoods: Although the socio-political situation is improving to some extent, enabling most income-generating economic activities to return to normal, conditions are not yet in place to improve the livelihoods of the poorest. The high prices of staple foods, lack of employment opportunities and low incomes of the poorest (less than 5,000 gourdes per month, according to the baseline study carried out by CRS under the ResPeC project in October 2019), especially in Corail and Pestel (Grand'Anse), are degrading their living conditions.

Very poor households are therefore continuing to increase sales of charcoal and animals to compensate for income losses, to delay the return of children to school, to consume early harvests, and to migrate temporarily to find casual employment. Other strategies being adopted to maintain a certain level of basic food consumption are increased purchases of food on credit, consumption of low-quality produce purchased on the market, reduction of adult consumption to prioritize children, and reduction in the quality of diet.

Assumptions

In addition to the assumptions at the national level, the most likely scenario for this zone from February to September 2020 is based on the following assumptions:

- According to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecasts, average rainfall is expected between February and August.
- Normal rainfall from February to May will support the beginning of the spring 2020 season.

- Favorable climatic conditions for the spring season indicate average harvests for beans and maize, in addition to wild produce such as breadfruit, bananas and mangoes. This will also support the beginning of the summer season.

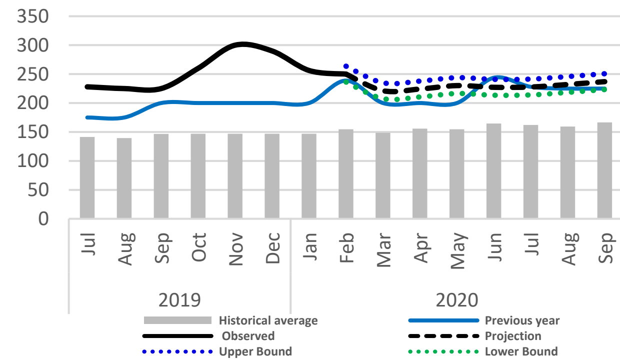
- Mangoes are expected to be available between March and June, with an average harvest. This will provide a complementary source of food for poor and very poor households.

- There is likely to be an average harvest for pineapples, sales of which should increase farmers' incomes.

- The price of local maize and beans will likely follow its seasonal trend by decreasing from January to March, followed by an increase in April then relative stability until May. From June, when the first harvests start to appear, the price is expected to fall, particularly in July and August.

- Depreciation of the gourde will likely continue to affect the prices of imported and local staple foods.

Figure 8. Les Cayes: observed and projected prices for local grain maize (HTG/6 lbs)



Source: *FEWS NET/CNSA*

Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Winter harvests of black beans and maize, roots and tubers (especially cassava) and bananas gathered from the wild will contribute very little to household consumption. Thus, food consumption will be highly dependent on market purchases, especially during the lean season when rice, flour and pasta will be much more popular. This will continue until June. No change is expected in the number of daily meals, but they are likely to decrease in nutritional quality due to very low diversification.

Spring farming activities will generate income for the poorest people, who usually sell their labor to farmers or growers during plowing, planting and weeding. However, households will have low purchasing power due to high food prices. As a result, very poor households will be forced to use crisis strategies from March during the lean season, such as increased sales of charcoal and animals to buy food, consumption of early harvests or wild produce, and increased purchases of food on credit. This will enable them to maintain a consumption level of at least one meal per day, but this will be poor in terms of nutritional quality. The zone will consequently remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) until June 2020.

Spring harvests (mainly maize and beans) and wild produce (particularly breadfruit and mango) will contribute to the consumption of very poor households. Income from harvest sales and other activities will also be used to purchase other necessary food items and supplements (rice, wheat flour). Consumption is expected to be normal during this period, especially as produce prices fall, thus giving greater access to staple foods. Diversification is expected to improve.

Given the outlook for a normal spring season, and then summer season, livelihoods are likely to stabilize during the second period of the outlook, with households resorting less to the previously mentioned crisis strategies. The area is therefore expected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) between June and September.

ABOUT SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

To project food security outcomes, FEWS NET develops a set of assumptions about likely events, their effects, and the probable responses of various actors. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to arrive at a most likely scenario for the coming eight months. Learn more here.