HAITI Food Security Outlook — June 2019 to January 2020

Uncertain socio-economic context and a difficult spring 2019 growing season

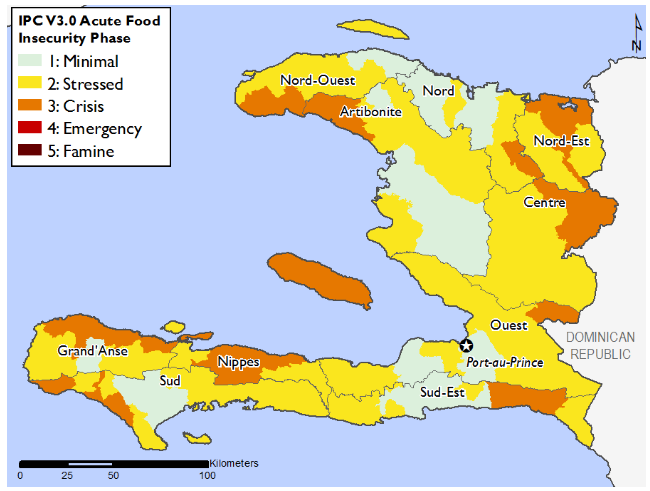
KEY MESSAGES

- Livelihoods are deteriorating as a result of high commodity prices and the persisting drought hampering the spring 2019 growing season, particularly in the north of the country. The poorest households continue to engage in negative coping strategies to meet their food needs. As a result, most regions remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity.

- Markets are constantly supplied, both with local products (especially in the Greater South) and imported products. Although the price of imported rice remains above average, it remains relatively stable compared to other products.

- The maize and bean crops planted in February are beginning to be harvested, particularly in Grand'Anse and the wet mountain areas of Nippes and Sud. Meanwhile, in the irrigated plains, maize and bean plantations forecast good harvests. However, the situation is difficult in drought-prone areas, particularly the Greater North and coastal areas (Nippes and Sud).

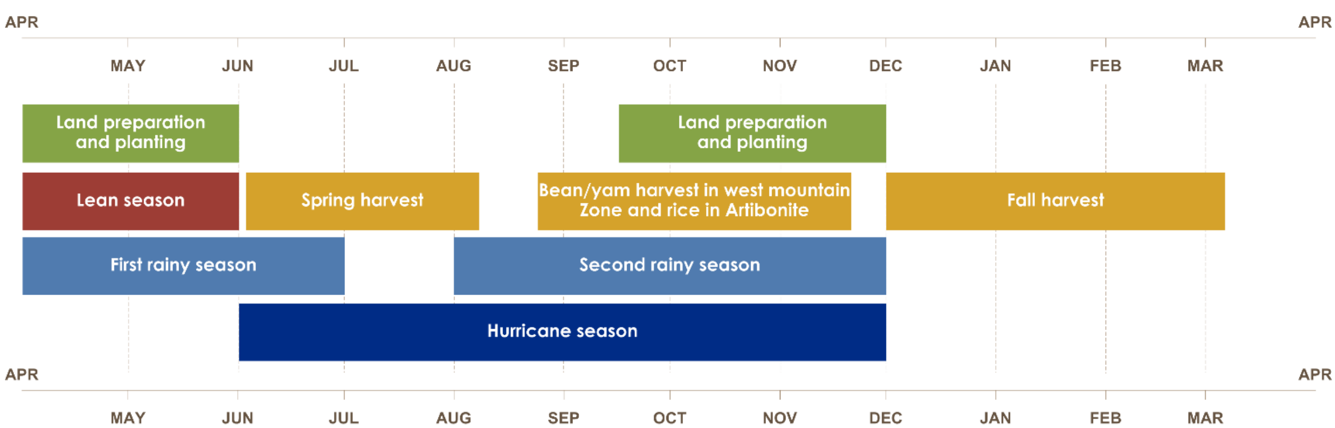
Current food security, June 2019



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.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: *FEWS NET*

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

FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity. The content of this report does not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current situation

Socio-political disruptions: The current socio-political situation is volatile and uncertain, against a backdrop of a lack of government, insecurity, accelerated depreciation of the gourde and inflation reaching 17.6 percent. The audit report of the Supreme Court of Accounts and Administrative Litigation (CSC/CA) on the management of Petrocaribe funds only accentuates the fragility of the current socio-economic and political context.

The main sources of foreign exchange likely to slow down the depreciation of the national currency are affected by this climate:

- The export sector is severely affected by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MCI) employee strike. In addition to the permits and visas granted to exporters by the MCI, the strike has caused the textile sector in duty-free zones, among other sectors, to experience difficulties in exporting for three weeks. Current budget support contracts with international partners such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Union and the International Monetary Fund cannot be signed due to a lack of government.

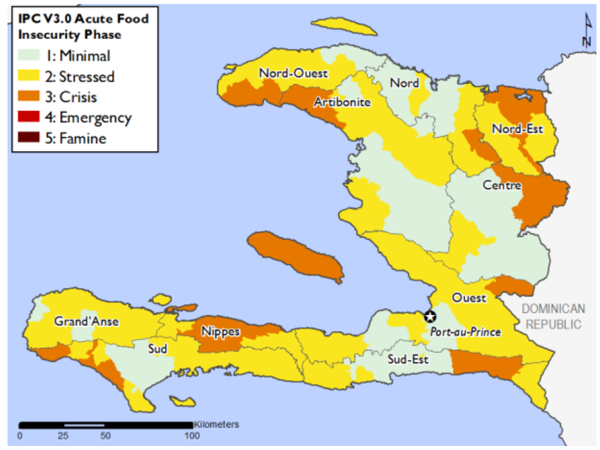
- The tourism sector has experienced an unprecedented decline as the current crisis has deepened.

- Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), which had already fallen sharply by 78 percent in 2018, continue to exhibit the same trend.

In the meantime, the Bank of Haiti (BRH) has announced a package of measures to prevent the gourde from plummeting further, including the injection of foreign currency, increased interest rates on BRH bonds and cash management. Until these measures are implemented, the situation will severely affect households' purchasing power and thus their access to food, which is primarily dependent on markets.

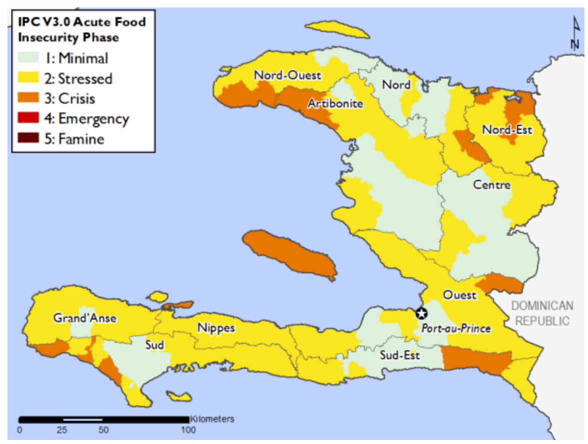
Climatic conditions and outlook: Overall, the precipitation levels recorded in May are below average, although an increase was observed during the third dekad in all departments except Sud-Est. Despite the irregularities in the temporal and spatial distribution of rainfall, the percentage of cultivated land affected by the low rainfall between the beginning of the season and the third dekad in May does not exceed 10 percent, except in Nippes, where it reaches between 25 and 40 percent. The normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) shows conditions that are very close to average (Figures 1 and 2), particularly in Nord-Ouest, Ouest, Centre, Nippes and Sud. The index is even higher than average in Artibonite and Sud-Est and lower than average in Nord and Nord-Est.

Projected food security outcomes, June to September 2019



Source: *FEWS NET*

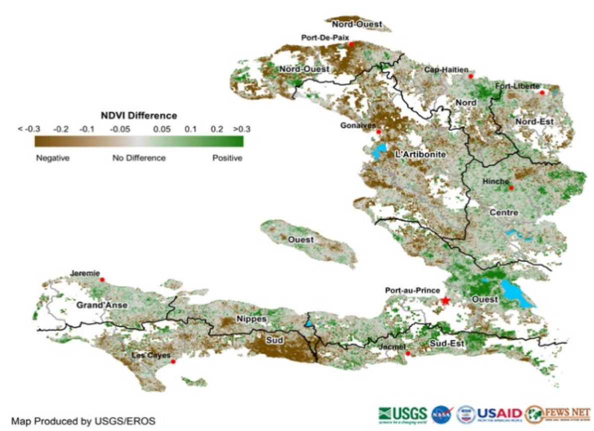
Projected food security outcomes, October 2019 to January 2020



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.

Figure 1. Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) anomaly, 1 to 10 June 2019 (2019 vs. 2018)



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

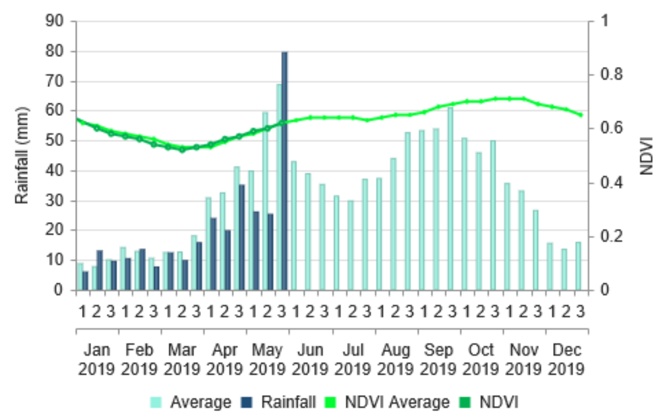
Impact on seasonal crop production: Precipitation in the third 10-day period in May proved very favorable to the development of spring crops (beans and maize in April), bananas, root vegetables and tubers (yams and cassava), citrus fruits and groundnuts, particularly in departments with 40 percent less rainfall than average in April and the first two dekads in May (Sud, Nippes, Sud-Est and Grand'Anse).

However, despite around 20 mm (24 percent) of rainfall above the average during the third dekad in May in the department of Nippes, particularly in the communes of Anse-à-Veau, Arnaud, L'Asile, Petit-Trou-de-Nippes and Plaisance-du-Sud, the agricultural stress index measured by the percentage of cultivated land affected by low rainfall is as high as 40 percent. Crops in these communes are growing at a below-average rate. In fact, maize and black bean harvests have even been observed in some areas where the Spring growing season began early, including in Grand'Anse and the mountainous areas of Nippes and Sud.

Food availability: The local food available is mostly beans and maize, which are currently being harvested in the abovementioned regions, bananas, root vegetables and tubers, and wild produce such as breadfruit (especially in Grand'Anse and Sud), some fruits (citrus fruits, mangos) and market garden produce, particularly in the HT06 area. On the whole, the markets are well supplied, though mostly through imports, as is usually the case.

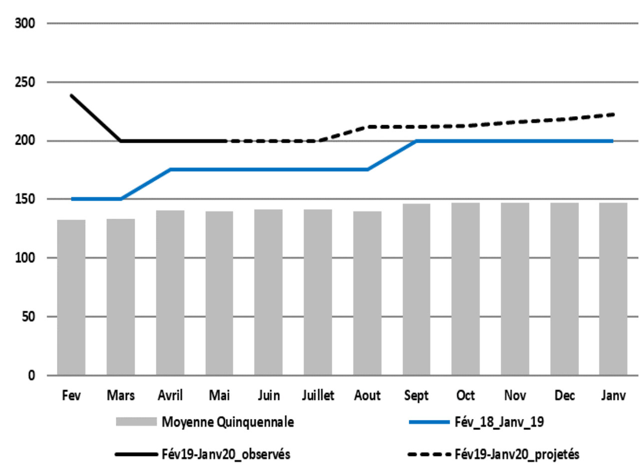
Price trends: At the national level, commodity prices are rising, exacerbated by political turbulence and the depreciation of the gourde against the United States dollar and the Dominican peso, the currencies of Haiti's main trading partners.

Figure 2. Haiti: Rainfall trends in mm and NDVI index trends, 2019



Source: *WFP-VAM CHIRPS/MODIS*

Figure 3. Port-au-Prince: Retail price of imported rice (4% Broken) (HTG/6 lbs)



Source: *FEWS NET*

Prices for local products, particularly maize and black beans, continue to rise, although at a lower rate than in February. The price of grain maize increased by more than 4 percent on average, from 131 to 137 gourdes in April, and by 5 percent between April and May, close to 145 gourdes/6 lb marmite. For the same period, the price of black beans rose by more than 6 percent on average, with a 6 lb marmite rising from 349.2 gourdes in March to over 371 gourdes in April and almost 400 gourdes, almost 8 percent, in May.

As for the price of imported products, the trend remains upwards given the sudden rise of the United States dollar against the gourde. The price of imported rice, after slight drops in March and April, rose significantly in all markets, with the exception of Port-au-Prince. The 6 lb marmite price rose from almost 223 gourdes to almost 245 gourdes in May, an average growth of around 10 percent at the national level. It should be noted that this increase was very significant on the Cayes market, with a positive change of almost 29 percent.

Animal production: The livestock situation, particularly of cattle and goats, has recently improved as a result of the latest rains, which have made fodder and water less scarce. Furthermore, the availability of mangos in relatively significant quantities in some areas is an important source of food for pigs.

Supply and demand for agricultural labor: In June, agricultural activities are mainly focused on the spring harvests, in areas where rainfall and crop weeding had been favorable and the spring growing season began in mid-April or May, such as Nord-Est and central Haut-Plateau. Labor demand is relatively low but varies from one region to another. In Sud, workers are hired on vetiver plantations and paid 100 gourdes a day. In Sud, workers are hired on vetiver plantations and paid 100 gourdes a day. This sector is very active in Sud, as this crop is important in the production of Haitian essential oils that are in high demand on the international market. In addition, many households in border areas make income from other sources, including migrating to another city or country. Low demand for labor has an impact only on households that have difficulties accessing other sources of income or migrating.

Other sources of income: Poor households are also engaged in subsistence activities such as small-scale trade, especially the sale of charcoal, which gradually intensifies in the Stressed and then Crisis phases. In border areas, in addition to charcoal, migration continues to be an attractive alternative to the deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the country, given the more competitive working conditions in the Dominican Republic. However, the adverse climatic conditions that also affect the Dominican Republic have rendered demand low in relation to normal conditions.

Food consumption and changes in livelihoods: The poorest households, who largely depend on market purchases for their food consumption, have seen their purchasing power gradually diminish as a result of a significant decline in income-generating agricultural activities and the rise in food commodity prices, compounded by the depreciation of the gourde and the unstable socio-political situation. Repeated shocks and their lasting impact are therefore key elements that affect the stocks and savings of the poorest households, who already lack resilience under normal circumstances. In rural areas in particular, intensifying the production and sale of charcoal, in addition to other small-scale trade, still offers an alternative to the current situation.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for June 2019 to January 2020 is based on the following assumptions:

- **ENSO conditions and weather forecasts:** Irregularities in the temporal and spatial distribution of rainfall during the start of the country's largest growing season, the spring season, are likely to have a negative impact on harvests in June, July and August. Furthermore, an extension of the dry period between the two rainy seasons would weaken the performance of the summer and autumn growing seasons, which already depend on the performance of the spring season. The cyclone season, which generally starts in June and ends in December, is expected to be slightly below average.

- **Agricultural production and harvesting:** Harvests and picking in spring (maize, beans, etc.) and summer (beans and then maize in cold areas) will yield below-average results, according to the agroclimatic projections for the period analyzed. Between June and July, mangos (all varieties) will be available throughout almost the entire country. The mango harvest is expected to be above average and should reach its peak in June. Mangos are likely to be replaced by avocados between August and December.

- **Agricultural labor:** The harvest activities of the spring and summer/autumn growing seasons and the launch of the winter growing season will give new momentum to the demand for agricultural labor. Supply may be limited because of the many workers who choose to migrate elsewhere in search of more attractive working conditions, particularly in the Dominican Republic.

- **The sale of charcoal:** This activity could be reduced at the end of the lean season in June 2019 in areas where the spring harvests are normal. It should, however, intensify in agro-ecological areas where losses are anticipated for the spring 2019 growing season.

- These **sources of income** may be supplemented by the sale of mangos (between June and July), avocados (between August and December), fishery products and livestock products, among others. Income from the sale of mangos is likely to be slightly above average and around average from the sale of animals and animal products. Income from fishing will depend on the nature of the cyclone season and, since the season does not present excessive risks, results are expected to be close to average or slightly above average.

- **General price trends:** Food commodity prices are likely to rise. The inflation rate will be higher than the average for the 1993–2013 period, which is around 15 percent. This inflation may be affected by the depreciation of the gourde (monetary inflation) and the increase in production costs (labor, agricultural inputs, etc.). Prices of imported food products, especially rice, are expected to increase.

- **Remittances:** Remittances from the Haitian diaspora may stagnate until August, and then increase in September (when schools reopen) and December (for the end-of-year festivities). Although this will not directly benefit very poor households, its possible impact on the availability and circulation of the United States currency in Haiti could help reduce pressure on the gourde/dollar exchange rate and, consequently, make imported food temporarily more affordable.

- **Trends in the exchange rate:** The Haitian currency continues to depreciate against the United States dollar and the Dominican peso. The depreciation rate, which was 17.5 percent in 2018, is likely to be even higher this year. The lack of government, political instability, negative expectations owing to a lack of confidence in the gourde on the part of economic agents and even the decline in Haiti's main sources of currency are all determining factors in the depreciation of the gourde. This depreciation may have a significant impact on imported staple food prices and thus on the purchasing power of households, particularly the poorest.

- **Spending behavior:** Households' non-food expenditure, especially when schools reopen between September and October, is likely to rise between the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020. As a result, given their relatively constant incomes, households may be subject to additional pressure to meet other food and non-food expenses.

- **Socio-political unrest:** The Petrocaribe situation and the parliamentary elections in October are likely to lead to political unrest, which, in addition to the lack of government and the rife insecurity in the country, could have consequences for the depreciation of the gourde and therefore both physical and economic consequences for households' access to food.

- **Food availability:** Between June and July 2019, the supply of food to markets is expected to be normal, especially for local products from the spring harvest, particularly in areas where this growing season is developing as normal. However, uncertainty linked to possible socio-political unrest could jeopardize markets' functioning and normal food supply. Moreover, spring harvests may be below average due to forecasted erratic weather. As a result, households may find it difficult to build lasting reserves.

Most likely food security outcomes

From June to September, food availability should be ensured by crops from the spring harvests (beans, maize, etc.) and other crops such as root vegetables, tubers, bananas, breadfruit and certain other fruits, particularly mangos. However, the persistent drought, which led to the late start to the 2019 spring harvest in some areas, particularly the northern part of the country, cast doubt on the possibility of improving local food availability. Thus, purchases of food at markets may remain predominant.

In addition, the production and sale of charcoal and the sale of labor and crops will generate income for very poor households. However, in the context of rising prices and significant exchange rate fluctuations, purchasing power will remain weak, with the poorest households having reduced access to staple foods. In these circumstances, the poorest households will continue to engage in negative coping strategies to meet their food needs. As a result, most regions will remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity.

The second period in the scenario (October–January) coincides with the summer/autumn harvests and with the launch of the winter growing season in the plains and wet mountain areas. Consumption is expected to return to normal levels. This is partly because of the harvest but also because of the seasonal increase in agricultural income. Moreover, the sale of labor and other sources of income should enable households to access local and imported products. The availability of some local products will lead to a relative decline in food prices, and an increase in remittances from Haitian migrants to their relatives will increase the circulation of foreign currencies, slightly improving the gourde/United States dollar exchange rate. The whole country will therefore be experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity, with some communes experiencing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity and others experiencing no food insecurity (IPC Phase 1).

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

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

Area	Event	Impact on food security conditions
Whole country	Socio-political unrest	Reduced market supply, inflation and reduced food consumption in the poorest households
Whole country	Worsening of the depreciation of the gourde	Increased prices and deteriorating access to imported food
Whole country	A significant climatic shock: drought, flooding, etc.	Crop losses and reduced food availability

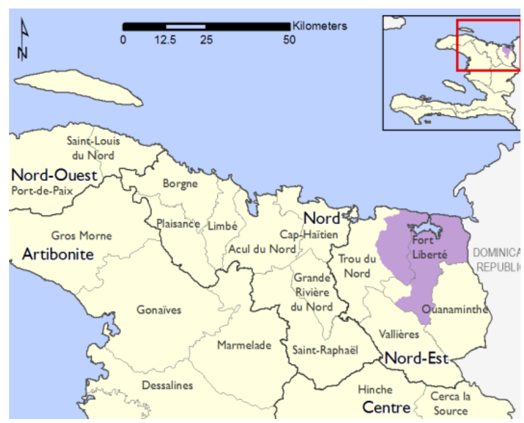
AREAS OF CONCERN

Nord-Est, HT02

Current situation

Seasonal progress: Unlike the first quarter of 2019, weather conditions improved slightly at the end of April and appeared to remain stable during the first 20 days of May, despite the delayed onset (Figure 5). Cumulative rainfall ranging from 55 to 75 mm has been recorded over the past two months. However, this did not improve the development of the spring season, as the soil was already too dry and rainfall was well below normal. Moreover, not only is the rainy season far later than last year, but the rain is very poorly distributed and is not falling at right time, when current and future crops need it most.

Figure 4. Area of concern: Nord-Est, HT02



Source: *FEWS NET*

The spring growing season did not take place this year in the area. Some farmers, wishing to take advantage of the last rains, attempted to sow beans, but the delay has diminished hopes of good, or even close-to-average, yields. For example, farmers, who have already experienced difficulties in previous seasons because of low rainfall, have little means of launching the 2019 spring growing season, even at a late stage, despite prior preparation of the land. Groundnut and yam planting is currently under way and the pigeon peas planted in April continue to grow slowly. At the same time, rice has not been planted due to low water levels in the lagoons. Apart from these crops, as well as bananas and mangos (in the mountains), there are almost no crops in the area.

Food availability: The availability of local products is very low, as there have been no harvests since last December. Low water levels in irrigation channels led to lower-than-expected rice yields from lagoons and therefore rice is not available in sufficient quantities on local markets. Currently, the local food available is predominantly root vegetables, tubers and bananas. The availability of mangos is currently decreasing, with the production that started in April in the plains having been completed. On the other hand, imported products of all types and those from other regions are available in relatively normal quantities.

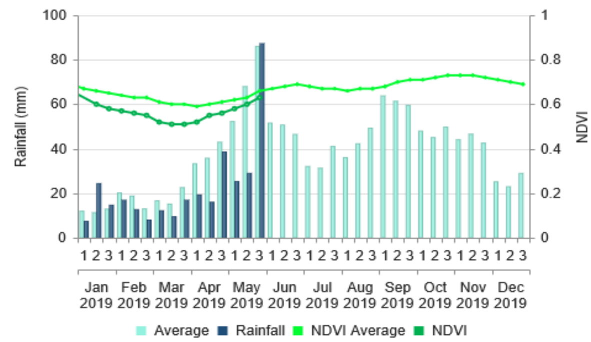
Livestock situation: Animals continue to face acute health problems (Newcastle disease and particularly Teschen disease) observed since last March. There is also a considerable shortage of fodder and water, despite the rainfall at the end of April and May, affecting large livestock in particular.

Price and market developments: Some local products, such as root vegetables, tubers and bananas, are seen at markets. In general, markets are mainly supplied with imported products, mostly from the Dominican Republic. The prices of imported and local products are very high. Instability of the dollar and peso against the gourde is one of the major determinants of inflation in the area. The prices of all food items are therefore above their five-year average.

Demand for labor: The decapitalization experienced by middle-income and wealthy farmers following losses from successive growing seasons has made them less able to rely on local agricultural labor. Demand for agricultural workers continues to be at the lowest levels, according to our informants in the area. Currently, even in the Dominican Republic, the chances of being employed in the fields are very slim because its farmers are also affected by the drought. Under these conditions, tree cutting and charcoal production are increasing and remain the only income option for almost all income groups.

Other sources of income: The production of wood and charcoal, which usually represents 10–20 percent of household income, is increasing considerably. In particular, it has intensified in the most vulnerable areas in the two departments that make up the HT02 area. In the absence of large-scale agricultural activities, a large number of households (predominantly women) are still involved in small-scale trade, especially with the Dominican Republic.

Figure 5. Evolution of rainfall (mm) in the Nord-Est department



Source: *WFP-VAM CHIRPS/MODIS*

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for June 2019 to January 2020 is based on the following assumptions:

- Although late and below normal, recent rainfall could benefit the growth of certain crops (pigeon peas, groundnuts, yams and bananas).
- The anticipated precipitation is expected to be below average and irregular until November, according to scientific partners (United States Geological Survey (USGS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)) and the North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME).
- Relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic will be normal and the border will not be closed. Market supplies will be fully maintained.
- Because of the sharp depreciation of the gourde against the peso, the prices of the food products imported from the Dominican Republic will be above average, but the price of broken rice will be closer to average because the effects of depreciation will be reduced by its high availability.
- The prices of local products (maize, beans, etc.) will follow their seasonal trends but will remain above the five-year average.
- The Dominican agricultural labor market may be less attractive this season because Dominican farmers are also affected by low rainfall, resulting in crop losses.

Most likely food security outcomes

For the first period in the scenario, the proportion of households' own food production will decrease given the expected losses in the 2019 spring growing season. In this context, the market's contribution to their food consumption may increase. At the same time, rising staple food prices threaten to induce even lower purchasing power, thus providing the poorest households with very limited access to these foods. These households, who largely depend on market purchases for their food consumption, have seen their purchasing power diminish as a result of a significant decline in income-generating agricultural activities and high food commodity prices.

Farmers did not have adequate means to hire agricultural workers. However, the two main sources of income for the poorest households in the area are the sale of crops and the sale of labor. If that is not possible, the intensification of the production and sale of charcoal remains the only alternative at present. During the first four months of the scenario, daily wages will therefore decline. Soil preparation and sowing activities did not take place as planned owing to low rainfall. These factors will contribute to maintaining food insecurity in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) throughout the scenario.

The last four months of the scenario coincide with the autumn and winter growing season and the summer harvest. Nevertheless, consumption could deteriorate, given the limited possibility of building reserves from the spring harvest. Thus, as the share of households' own production in their food consumption is likely to fall again, food purchases will remain very significant. In this context, the livelihood situation is not expected to improve, particularly in the dry plains of this department. Most communes will therefore remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), while those in the mountains may experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity.

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

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

Area	Event	Impact on food security conditions
HT02	Socio-political unrest	Reduced market supply, inflation and reduced food consumption in the poorest households
HT02	Worsening of the depreciation of the gourde	Increased prices and deteriorating access to imported food
HT02	A significant climatic shock: drought, flooding, etc.	Crop losses and reduced food availability

AREA OF CONCERN

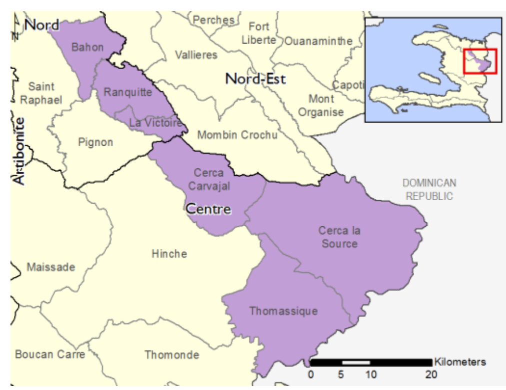
Haut-Plateau, HT03

Current situation

Seasonal progress: Since April, precipitation levels in the HT03 Haut-Plateau area have increased (Figure 7). Surprisingly, rainfall has occurred much earlier than last year. However, it is still below average.

Despite this, farmers have taken the opportunity to start the spring growing season, although rainfall predictions remain uncertain. The region is therefore in the midst of the rainy season, facilitating the start of land preparation and sowing activities in all communes.

Figure 6. Area of concern: Plateau-Central, HT03



Source: *FEWS NET*

As noted above, the current situation is characterized by sowing and growth in plantations where seeds were sown in April. Comprising mainly maize, pigeon peas and cowpeas, they are growing normally. In mountainous areas (the Cerca-Cavajal area), bean crops, sown in March in drought conditions, have not survived, despite the current rains. Farmers are attempting to catch up with the season in order to compensate for some of the losses, pending the next bean season, which is expected to take place next August. The last harvests occurred in January/February, for pigeon peas in particular. The only harvesting activity that is currently under way is the harvesting of mangos, vegetables, bananas and cassava. According to our key informants on the ground, mango production is abundant this year. Nevertheless, mangos are selling for higher prices than last year on the Hinche departmental market.

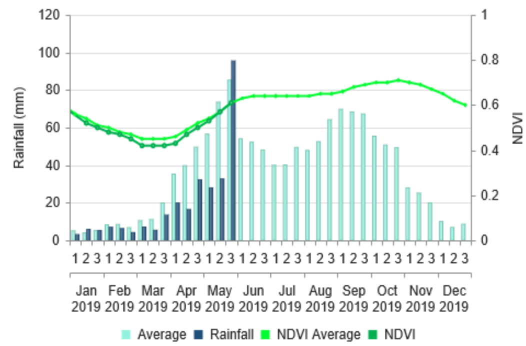
Food availability: Domestic production normally accounts for 15 percent of the food sources of poor households in the HT03 area (Livelihoods Profile, 2015). There are currently no harvests under way, apart from bananas, vegetables and cassava. Local food availability therefore comprises these foods. Also available are maize and beans from other parts of the country or the Dominican Republic. The area remains dependent on the Dominican Republic for all categories of food supplies. Thus, the food products available on regional and local markets are mostly Dominican products such as cooking oil, flour, ground maize, peas, eggs, milk, sugar, condiments and, above all, broken rice. Only the rice sold at markets does not come from the Dominican Republic, because consumers prefer varieties from the United States or Asia.

Livestock situation: Unlike our last visit to the area, domestic animals are recovering thanks to rainfall, which increases the growth of fodder and the availability of water. However, pigs and poultry are still affected by Teschen and Newcastle disease, respectively.

Price and market developments: Typically, irrespective of whether there is a harvest or not, markets are very well supplied, predominantly with imported products, most of which come from the Dominican Republic. There is currently much lower availability of local products, which are therefore less accessible, given their seasonal scarcity. The price of maize, one of the area's typical products, has been high for more than three months. Additionally, there was a significant increase of more than 22 percent between March and April and 16 percent in May. This increase is attributable, inter alia, to sowing activities, which have been carried out since the arrival of the rain. It should be noted that fluctuations in the price of this product are seasonal and thus depend on the sowing period and the harvest period (Figure 8). Maize prices also remain higher than last year and the five-year average.

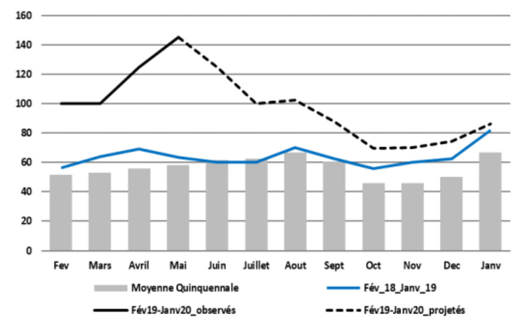
With the socio-economic crisis that is affecting the country, wholesalers procure much more on the Dominican market to resell on local markets, rather than in Port-au-Prince (on the Croix des Bossales market), which is heavily affected by civil insecurity. They have credit facilities with Dominican distributors, facilitating procurement. Procuring supplies in the Dominican Republic means that the imported food products are sold at a cheaper price in Centre than in Port-au-Prince, despite the peso's appreciation against the gourde.

Figure 7. Evolution of rainfall (mm) in the Centre department



Source: *WFP-VAM CHIRPS/MODIS*

Figure 8. Hinche: Retail price of local grain maize (HTG/6 lbs)



Source: *FEWS NET*

Demand for labor: For very poor households in the HT03 area, the primary source of income is still selling their labor. Small-scale trade and the sale of charcoal and crops allow the very poor to make up for losses or supplement their income. Despite ongoing agricultural activities, labor demand is not increasing, as farmers lack the means to hire. Thus, agricultural workers continue to work as day laborers for Dominican farmers or to engage in non-agricultural activities.

Assumptions

The most likely scenario for June 2019 to January 2020 is based on the following assumptions:

- Precipitation is likely to be below normal and irregular over the projection period, which could affect crops.
- Relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic will be normal and the border will not be closed. Market supplies will be fully maintained.
- The Dominican agricultural labor market will continue to be important, offering casual labor higher pay than they would receive in Haiti.
- Prices of local products, including maize and beans, may decrease with the July–August and October–December harvests, but will remain above average.
- High temperatures are likely to reduce soil moisture and thus could affect crops.
- The price of maize is expected to increase during the sowing and lean seasons. Projections show that the price will remain above the five-year average throughout the outlook period.
- The price of black beans will also follow seasonal trends and will remain high compared to the five-year average.

- The rise of the peso against the gourde could lead to higher prices for products imported from the Dominican Republic, in particular for broken rice, which is commonly consumed in the area.

- The prices of the food products imported from the Dominican Republic will be above average, but the price of broken rice will be closer to average because of its high availability.

Most likely food security outcomes

During the first four months of the scenario, particularly between July and August, an increase in local food availability is expected after the spring harvest. The share of the poorest households' own production in their food consumption is expected to increase and consist of bananas, cassava and, above all, maize and beans. However, purchases of food at markets will remain predominant. Moreover, the availability and relative accessibility of broken rice, which is extremely commonly consumed by the very poorest households in the area, will ensure a degree of stability in consumption levels. Low purchasing power and low incomes will remain the main challenge for households.

Despite the activities of the spring growing season, the volume of jobs available is low due to farmers' inability to hire in the context of rising prices and labor costs. Instead, income comes from the production and sale of charcoal. Even if a nominal increase in income were to be observed, the high commodity prices would reduce purchasing power. The increase in income stems from the adoption of negative coping strategies in response to rising commodity prices. Therefore, during this period, the area will continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

For the second period in the scenario, the summer/autumn harvests in October and November and the pigeon peas harvested from December onwards, in addition to bananas and root vegetables, will ensure local availability. The markets will be very well supplied with both local and imported products. The growth in local availability will lead to a decrease in prices for staple foods, particularly cowpeas and other varieties which are in lower demand during this period, when pigeon peas are widely consumed.

The summer/autumn harvest activities and the harvest of pigeon peas will provide casual labor, albeit to a limited extent, given the significant slowdown in large-scale agricultural activities during this period. Workers will, as usual, engage in other non-agricultural activities or migrate. Price projections suggest that, despite near normal harvests in the area, prices will remain above their five-year average, limiting access to staple foods. However, livelihoods will remain stable. The communes of Haut-Plateau are likely to experience Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity.

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

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

Area	Event	Impact on food security conditions
Whole country	Socio-political unrest	Reduced market supply, inflation and reduced food consumption in the poorest households
Whole country	Worsening of the depreciation of the gourde	Increased prices and deteriorating access to imported food
Whole country	A significant climatic shock: drought, flooding, etc.	Crop losses and reduced food availability

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. Usually, FEWS NET outlines the most likely scenario. Learn more here.