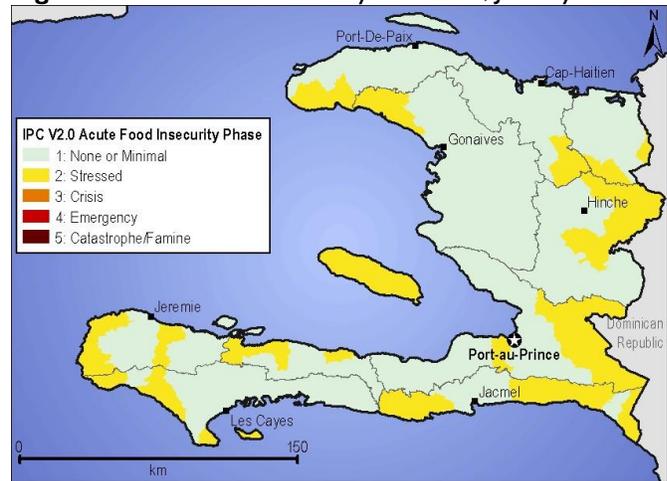


*Poor harvests and high prices fuel food insecurity*

**KEY MESSAGES**

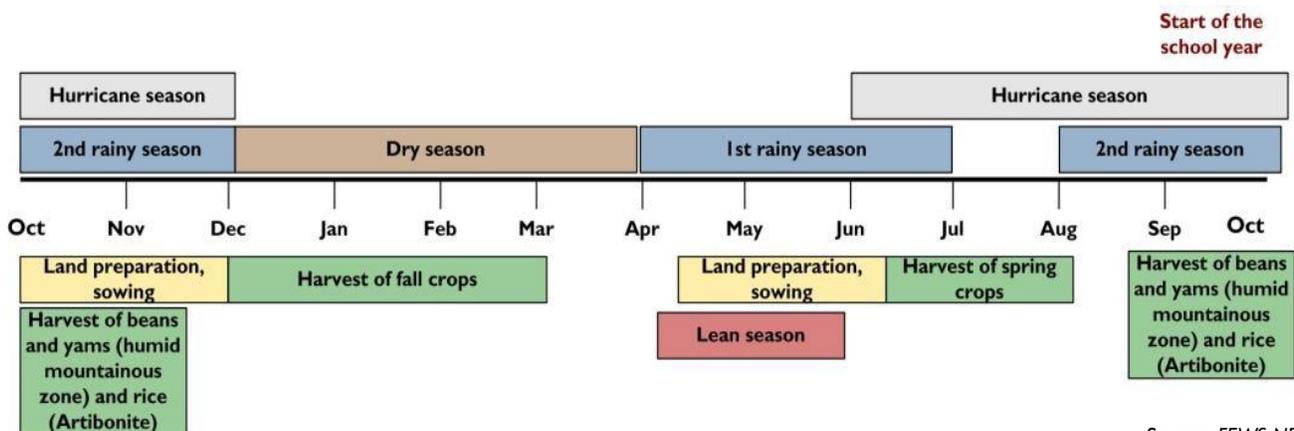
- Crop failures and seasonal wage losses in the aftermath of successive shocks in 2012 have triggered high food insecurity levels in at-risk areas faster than reported in FEWS NET’s October Outlook report, particularly on the Southern Peninsula, in the Northwest, and on La Gonâve Island. Reduced availability of locally grown food crops, high prices, and limited labor demand will put most of these areas in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between February and May.
- Well-targeted agricultural assistance delivered by February/March is needed to prevent a further deterioration in food security after the June harvest. Following poor 2012 harvests, food reserves are already depleted and seeds are either unavailable or unaffordable in most agricultural zones. Though current forecasts are predicting normal rainy season conditions, poor seed access could jeopardize crop production levels.
- Early crop harvests in May should begin to reduce food insecurity. With the first spring harvests of mangos, cowpeas, and beans, conditions should start to improve by late May, even with reduced cultivation areas. Access to wage income from on-farm employment should help restore households in rural crop-producing areas facing crisis levels of food insecurity to Stress (IPC Phase 2).

**Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, January 2013**



Source: FEWS NET  
This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit [www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale](http://www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale) for more on this scale.

**SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR**



Source: FEWS NET

## NATIONAL OVERVIEW

### Current situation

The year 2012 witnessed a string of shocks, including two periods of drought, two hurricanes, and flooding, which severely undermined crop production all across the country though, to different degrees depending on the specific zone.

In Haiti, where crop production accounts for approximately half the national food supply, these shocks disrupted livelihoods and curtailed food access of certain wealth groups, particularly in rural areas where local harvests can typically meet food needs for as long as three to six months in an average year. Based on the 2012 harvest assessments by the CNSA (Office of the National Food Security Coordinator) and its partners, nationwide crop production for 2012 was estimated at only about half the country's average annual output. This production shortfall has created shortages of locally grown food crops, increased prices, reduced farm labor and income, and triggered the use of coping strategies well before the beginning of the earlier than usual lean season. Very poor and poor rural households will be the most affected, as they are prematurely market-dependent, particularly in dry agropastoral areas of the Southern Peninsula, the Northwestern Peninsula, and certain municipalities in the North, on the Central Plateau, and on La Gonâve Island.

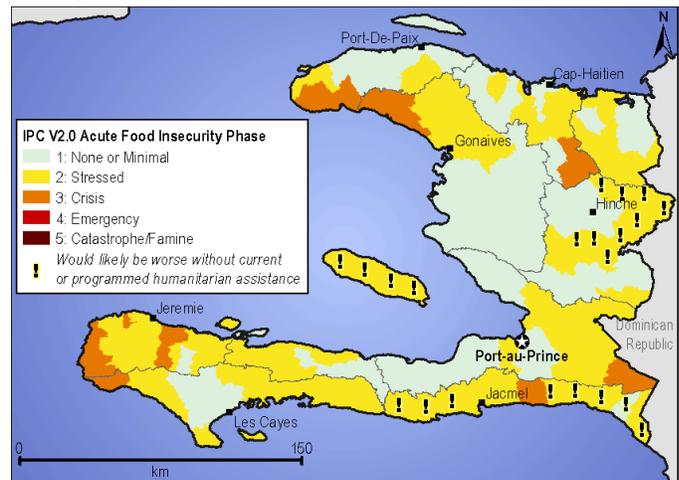
### Seasonal progress

**Following a poor winter harvest, the areas hardest hit by agroclimatic shocks beginning as early as May/June 2012 are experiencing an earlier than usual lean season.** The dry season from December to February/March generally coincides with the harvesting period for pigeon pea and sorghum crops (planted in the spring) and bean crops planted in December in irrigated farming schemes. These harvests normally enable households to rebuild their food reserves in preparation for the lean season, which generally begins in March/April, even poor households in rural areas of the country. However, this year's December and January harvests of sorghum and pigeon pea crops were below-average in most parts of the country, with the exception of the Central Plateau and a few municipalities in the upper Artibonite and the Northwest which, according to farming experts, had average harvests. In the aftermath of these poor harvests, poor households are facing an onset of the lean season by January/February, two to three months earlier than usual, particularly in the Southeast, the far western reaches of the Northwest, and in certain municipalities in the Southern and Central departments, Grand-Anse, and Nippes.

**Agricultural activities are already underway in certain parts of the country, even before the start of the rainy season.**

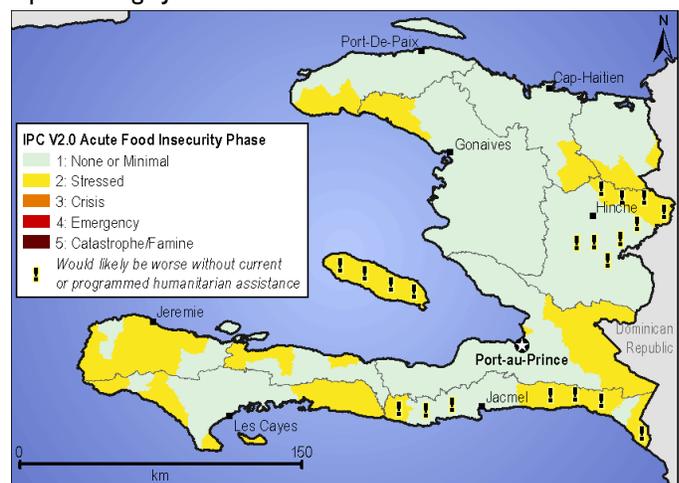
Farmers in the Southeast started preparing their land as early as January in order to take advantage of any possible rainfall in February for the planting of bean crops in humid and semi-humid mountain areas. Farmers in other areas such as the upper Central Plateau will begin planting in April and continue through the month of May. Rice, bean, and market garden crops are currently being grown in the Artibonite Valley, St. Raphael, certain municipalities in the Northeast, and irrigated plain areas. With the variability in rainy season conditions in the last few years, farmers in most parts of the country will be inclined to take advantage of the first rainfall to plant their fields.

**Figure 2.** Most likely estimated food security outcomes for January through March 2013



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 3.** Most likely estimated food security outcomes for April through June 2013



Source: FEWS NET

These maps represent acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making, and do not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit [www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale](http://www.fews.net/foodinsecurityscale) for more on this scale.

**Despite overall crop deficits and a poor nationwide harvest, conditions in certain parts of the country such as the lower Artibonite Valley and certain municipalities in the North and the lower Central Plateau have been conducive to good crop growth and development.** According to local experts, farmers in the Artibonite Valley planted 15 to 20 percent larger than usual areas in bean crops this past December, motivated by the high price of beans on domestic markets. Market garden crops such as onions, tomatoes and peppers are in various stages of development but, in general, their progress is in line with normal seasonal growth patterns. With the good availability and affordability of inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and irrigation water for most farmers in this area, experts are expecting an average if not above-average harvest for these zones. The large productive capacity in this area is reflected in the plentiful supplies of locally grown rice, green beans, vegetables, and citrus fruits on local markets such as Estère and Pont Sondé.

**The upcoming growing season beginning in March/April will afford an opportunity for households to rebuild their food reserves and improve their food access, particularly poor households.** Weather forecasts by the International Research Institute for Climate and Society and NOAA are predicting a normal spring rainy season, which bodes well for livelihood recovery starting in early May. The rainy season normally begins in March/April in an average year.

#### *Market conditions*

Prices for imported foodstuffs vary from one market to another according to the availability of supplies, road conditions, and the distance from Port-au-Prince, the main source of supply for local traders. Prices for locally grown food crops are edging upwards, while prices for most imports (rice, flour, and sugar) are stable. The price of imported rice has been fairly stable on just about all markets since November of last year, though January prices in Port-au-Prince were up slightly, or by five percent, from the same time last year. In contrast, the price of rice on the Jacmel market edged downwards by approximately three percent between January of 2012 and January of this year. Prices for oil, sugar, and flour are following more or less similar trends.

Fluctuations in the prices of locally grown food crops are more significant. Market supply of bananas, beans, maize, and sorghum has been limited, particularly in areas affected by climatic shocks in 2012, which resulted in price increases of up to 50 percent between August and November of last year in just about all parts of the country for local crops such as beans, maize, bananas, and fruit. Food prices on markets around the country stayed above the five-year average through December, even with the slight decrease in prices with the harvest of pigeon peas, which are used as a substitute food. Bean prices inched downwards between December and January on the Port-au-Prince market, but rose by 13 and eight percent, respectively, in Hinche and Jacmel. January prices for local maize crops in Port-au-Prince were unchanged from December but 31 percent above figures for the same time last year.

There are reports of new trade networks, with merchants traveling up from the southern part of the country to buy supplies of staple foodstuffs on border markets (such as Malpasse), and the flow of cross-border trade between Haiti and the Dominican Republic appears to be picking up. With the shortage of locally grown crops, the rural population is eating more flour, wheat, and rice, replacing their usual diet of yams, pigeon peas, sorghum, and maize.

#### *Trends in food security conditions in areas of concern*

Food insecurity in the dry agriculture and fishing zone and the dry agropastoral zone of the Southern Peninsula and the dry pastoral zone in the West and the far western reaches of the Northwest is a continuing source of concern. Climatic shocks in 2012 not only damaged seasonal crops such as grains and pulses, but destroyed perennials like banana plants and fruit trees which are ordinarily an important source of food, particularly between March and June when households are highly market-dependent. Banana plants in advanced growth and production stages were uprooted by extreme hurricane winds or were waterlogged by flooding, with losses in the North, South, and West estimated at over 70 percent. Banana plantations in parts of the Northwest, North, and Northeast were not as severely damaged.

**La Gonâve Island:** La Gonâve Island is split between two livelihood zones, with agropastoral and dry agropastoral zones, where the main sources of food include market purchase and local crop production, and the primary income sources among poor households are wage labor and gifts. January through June is marked by harvests of pigeon pea, pearl millet, and groundnut crops. There is normally a large demand for labor during the three-month period from January through March to prepare for the spring growing season. However, seed availability has been significantly curtailed in this area, a factor that is expected to limit field preparation activities for the spring growing season. Local residents are still feeling the after-effects of drought and storms that destroyed crops and killed livestock, driving up food prices and eroding household purchasing power. Market supplies are limited mainly to imports. As expected, the December/January sorghum and pigeon pea harvests were well below-average and, without a well-targeted assistance program, La Gonâve would have been in IPC

Phase 3 (crisis) between January and March of this year. In fact, 4,700 households are being furnished with food aid under a food voucher program designed to meet the basic food needs of program recipients between December and July, which should help bring down food insecurity levels from IPC Phase 3 (crisis) to IPC Phase 2 (stressed) between February and June.

#### *Humanitarian and agricultural assistance*

A number of different stakeholders are conducting short-term (three-to-eight-month-long) assistance programs in the Central, Northeastern, Southeastern, Northwestern, and Western departments, which include canal maintenance, the rehabilitation of farm-to-market roads, seed distribution, and food assistance vouchers. Several stakeholders are conducting cash-for-work activities and food distribution programs in the upper Central Plateau. Month-long food assistance programs for poor households in remote hill areas of the Western and Southeastern departments are scheduled to begin in March, and are targeting 12,500 recipients. Labor-intensive public works will be conducted in several departments, including the Northwest and the Northeast. These projects will improve food security in certain areas like the Southeast, particularly for very poor and poor households. Close to 40,000 households in at-risk areas around the country will receive some form of assistance.

#### *Assumptions*

The most likely food security scenario for the period from January through June 2013 is based on the following general assumptions with regard to national level conditions:

- According to seasonal forecasts by the International Research Institute for Climate and Society and the NOAA, normal rainfall is expected between February and June. A timely start-of-season and good spatial-temporal distribution of rainfall will encourage investment by farmers hoping to produce a decent harvest.
- After two consecutive failed seasons, without well-targeted assistance, farmers will lack the necessary resources to take full advantage of the spring growing season, even with good rainfall conditions. The problem lies in the unavailability and unaffordability of necessary supplies of seeds, which are both scarce and extremely expensive. The result will be the planting of smaller than usual areas in crops, particularly in dry agriculture and fishing zones and agropastoral zones.
- The harvest of winter bean crops scheduled for sometime in early March will be 10 to 15 percent smaller than usual, except in the lower Artibonite, which is expecting an above-average harvest. This harvest should not have a major impact on market prices for beans.
- The Ministry of Agriculture will continue to subsidize the cost of chemical fertilizer, which could be available on the market throughout the outlook period. However, given the high global market price of chemical fertilizer, farmers will continue to pay much higher prices for these inputs compared with figures for 2010 (900 gourdes for a 100 pound sack of fertilizer in 2013, compared with 500 gourdes in 2010). Farmers in certain areas such as the southern coast will be inclined to use less fertilizer for their bean crops, resulting in lower than usual yields.
- With the good availability of irrigation water and fertilizer, the rice harvest in the Artibonite should be near-average. Fortunately for poor households, there will be a normal demand for labor in this area throughout the outlook period.
- The Ministry of Agriculture will implement its agriculture recovery program, including livelihood assistance through CFW activities and technical assistance for farmers. Certain projects involving the distribution of bean seeds in December, canal maintenance, and repairs to roads and small-scale irrigation systems are already underway, while other projects for the spring growing season may not start up in time to help ensure farmers a successful season. Of the US\$74 million in funding requested at the end of last year, only US\$10 million has been raised to date.
- NGOs and international partners active in the agricultural sector will support farmers through the spring growing season by providing them with seeds and farm implements and by conducting CFW activities, particularly in the Southeast and certain municipalities in the Southern, Northwestern, and Artibonite departments. Though seed assistance will probably not reach farmers in time for them to maximize planting activities, the CFW programs will allow poor households to earn enough cash to help rebuild their assets. The food assistance furnished by humanitarian organizations active in the Southeast, the West, and the Central Plateau should ease current food insecurity levels in these areas. Food assistance programs targeted at very poor and poor households, the groups hardest hit by last year's shocks, should help bring down current crisis levels of food insecurity to IPC Phase 2 (stressed), particularly in the Southeast, La Gonave, and the Central Plateau.
- The increasingly limited availability of locally grown food crops (beans, bananas, and maize) will drive prices on markets across the country higher than usual between now and late June, particularly in the North, the Northeast, the Northwest, the West, and Southern Peninsula. Prices for these crops, which are already 25 to 30 percent above-normal, could surpass the five-year average by as much as 30 to 35 percent, in which case households will be unable to maintain their access to these staples and will resort to less expensive substitute foods with lower nutritional value.

- Imports of staple foodstuffs will increase to keep pace with the growing demand for these imports, fueled by significant local crop losses.
- A seasonal upsurge in cholera cases could affect poor households, particularly in the Artibonite, the Central Plateau, the South, Nippes, the Southeast, and the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area where sanitation conditions are precarious between March and June, especially during the rainy season.
- May floods could damage crops and agricultural infrastructure in the Artibonite, the Southeast, the South, and Nippes, as is so often the case at that time of year.
- Migrant remittance inflows to Haiti from February to June will stay remain consistent with normal seasonal trends.
- The lean season for poor households in virtually all parts of the country is expected to begin earlier than usual (by January/February instead of March/April), particularly in the Northeast, on the Northwest Peninsula, and in certain parts of the Western department and the Southern Peninsula.

### *Most likely food security outcomes*

The food security situation in areas affected by last year's climatic shocks will steadily deteriorate between February and May. For the most part, poor households have already depleted their food reserves and have very little income-earning potential, while growing increasingly market-dependent. Sorghum and pigeon pea crops harvested in January by poor households in these areas will not even last until February. Most of these households were in IPC Phase 2 (stressed) as of January. With no crops left to harvest between February and April, particularly in rainfed farming areas, they will be dependent on market-buying to meet close to 100 percent of their food needs, 20 percent more than usual. The reduced demand for labor, their main source of income, and the rising prices of staple foodstuffs will drive them to apply irreversible coping strategies to meet their food needs, such as the selling of livestock and the felling of fruit trees. Many such households in the Southeast and in certain municipalities in Grand Anse, the South, the Northeast, and the upper Artibonite will be propelled into IPC Phase 3 (crisis) between February and May without a well-planned and appropriately targeted assistance program. With a normal pattern of rainfall between March and June, as of May, the cowpea harvest and the first round of mango and bean harvests should generally improve food security in these areas to Stress levels (IPC Phase 2).

## **AREAS OF CONCERN**

### **Semi-humid agropastoral areas of the Southeast (Bainet) and the Southern Peninsula (Dame Marie, Anse d'Ainault, Les Irois, and Tiburon)**

The main spring growing season beginning with land preparation work in February/March provides employment opportunities for farm laborers. This source of income is crucial for very poor and poor households, which account for more than half the population. These households make their living from farming and normally purchase close to 80 percent of their food supplies on the local market at this time of year, rendering them highly vulnerable to expected price increases during the lean season in April/May. Household purchasing power in these semi-humid agropastoral areas is dependent on different economic activities such as farming, livestock-raising, fishing, and small-scale trading. Crops such as beans, yams, maize, bananas, cassava, sweet potatoes, and breadfruits are the mainstay of the local diet. However, the scarcity of these food crops in the first two months of this year is causing local households to resort to eating much larger quantities of substitute foods like imported rice and wheat flour and, to a lesser extent, locally grown pigeon peas. The month of January normally coincides with the harvest of pigeon pea and sorghum crops and the planting season for perennial crops such as coffee, cacao, and sugar cane.

#### *Current situation*

Poor households are currently facing an earlier than usual lean season (beginning in January instead of in March) after a below-average harvest undermined by the combined effects of 2012 drought conditions, storms, and flooding. The loss of 15 to 20 percent of their total income with the slow-down in agricultural labor, and the associated erosion in other secondary sources of income are causing poor households to increase their sales of charcoal and to resort to buying on credit and internal migration as a survival mechanism. Forced to rely on market purchase for 80 percent of the family food basket, poor households were classified in IPC Phase 2 (stressed) as of January.

The last harvests of sorghum and pigeon peas, the most important food crops in the last quarter of the year (for consumption and trade) were staggered throughout December and January. Experts deployed in this area estimate output at between 50 and 70 percent of the 2011 harvest, which is considered an average crop year in the southern coastal area.

Groundnuts, an important cash crop in this area, were also harvested between November and January of this year, creating a large demand for labor. However, according to planters, crop yields were only approximately 70 percent of normal following drought conditions. Available supplies of breadfruit, which are normally extremely accessible and widely consumed by poor households, and bananas, which are part of the daily diet of all population groups, are 20 percent smaller than usual. Planting activities for bean crops grown in irrigated farming schemes started up in December. The harvest, expected sometime in February, will have very little impact on the food security situation in this area. The size of the area planted in crops is estimated at around 85 percent of the normal cropped area, and the quantity of seeds distributed by food security partners was insufficient for normal planting levels, and was also potentially poor quality.

Market supplies of locally grown food crops are limited, and prices have increased. There is a regular flow of imports and prices for the last quarter of 2012 were relatively high but stable. The pigeon pea harvest (though smaller than usual) has driven down the price of a *"marmite"* (unit of measurement) of black beans, which is currently trading for 15 percent less than in October of last year, though its price is still up by 35 to 45 percent from the same time last year. Market shortages of bananas have doubled the price per bunch since the end of 2011. Depletion of milled maize supplies forced up the price of a *marmite* of this product on southern markets by 40 percent between October of last year and this January. On the other hand, the price of a *marmite* of sorghum has dropped by approximately 15 percent since the beginning of the harvest in November.

The main sources of income for the poorest households at this time of year are wage labor and crop sales. With the poor 2012 harvest, seed shortages, and low levels of capital, farmers will most likely scale back their spending and hire fewer than usual workers between now and the start of the spring growing season in March/April. Many poor households will be forced into selling charcoal and lumber. Others, like fishing households in Dame Marie, will take to working in sand pits.

The assistance to be provided under the cash distribution programs planned by international organizations should ease food insecurity during the outlook period, in some cases. Food assistance by international organizations includes the targeting of 600 families in the municipalities of Dame Marie, Anse d'Hainaut, and Les Irois. NGOs will organize seed fairs in February and March at which 300 farmers in the municipalities of Chardonnières, Port à Piment, Coteaux, Roche à Bateau, Tiburon, and Les Anglais will be given vouchers with which to buy seeds as part of the Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP). Even with the jump-starting of farming activities beginning in March, poor households will still be facing the loss of approximately 15 to 20 percent of their total income.

### *Assumptions*

The most likely food security scenario for the period from January through June 2013 is based on the following general assumptions specific to these zones:

- The condition of major roads will deteriorate during the rainy season, driving up staple food prices in more remote areas and further eroding the purchasing power of poor households.
- The damage to fishing equipment from Hurricanes Isaac and Sandy will limit the scale of fishing activities beginning in March. Hurricane Sandy, in particular, wrecked havoc on the fishing sector (see the damage assessment by the CNSA and its partners). Recently positioned fish concentration structures were hit hard. All types of fishing equipment, including boats, nets, and pots, were destroyed or swept away by floodwaters from Tropical Storm Sandy, undermining the livelihood assets of fishing communities.
- This year's lean season will begin two months early and last longer than usual.
- On average, lack of access to seeds will scale back the size of cropped areas for the spring growing season to 70 to 80 percent of their usual size. However, harvests of sweet potatoes, bananas, breadfruits, and mangoes should go smoothly, beginning in May.
- NGOs and the Ministry of Agriculture will furnish poor households with seed assistance but, with the limited market supply of seeds, the volume of aid will probably not suffice to meet full cultivation needs, or will be delayed.

### *Most likely food security outcomes*

The earlier than usual start of the lean season, limited farm labor demand, erosion in their various sources of income, and the high price of staple foods will make it that much harder for poor households to meet their food needs with their normal purchasing power weakened by the combined effects of production shortfalls, depleted food supplies, and the lack of seasonal work in the near term. This will propel them into IPC Phase 3 (crisis) between February and May. Harvests of sweet potatoes, mangos, and beans beginning in May will significantly improve household income and food availability, lifting poor households out of IPC Phase 3 and back into IPC Phase 2 (stressed) in May and June.

## Dry farming and fishing areas: Anse-Pitres, Belle-Anse, Grand-Gosier, Côtes de Fer, Marigot, Roseaux, and Corail

The mainstays of the local economies of these areas are farming, livestock-raising, and charcoal production. Poor households generally diversify their activities at this time of year to mitigate their risk of food insecurity, with demand for farm labor at daily wage rates of from 75 to 200 HTG bottoming out between January and February, which is the slow season for farming activities. Poor households ordinarily earn a large part of their income from on-farm wage labor. The month of January normally coincides with the sorghum harvest, while the month of February marks the beginning of the internal migration period, which runs through April. Normally, the diets of poor households during this two-month period consist mostly of pearl millet, pigeon peas, and other crops from their own harvests. This year, however, these households are eating mostly rice, flour, and wheat purchased on the market.

### *Current situation*

Poor households classified in IPC Phase 2 (stressed) in January are being propelled into IPC Phase 3 (crisis) by the compounding effects of large shortfalls in crop production, losses of household income, and staple food price increases, which are limiting poor household access to staple foodstuffs. Granaries are empty and, in general, prices are very high on local markets, which are playing an even larger than usual role as a primary food source in the face of the poor harvests. Asset depletion is compelling better-off households to hire fewer farmhands, replacing them with family labor, sharply reducing the average incomes of very poor households.

Adding to harvests of sweet potatoes and groundnuts, seasonal pigeon pea and sorghum harvests extended through the end of January. However, yields of these latter crops were as much as 70 percent below-normal due to the drought, which hindered their growth, and the two consecutive hurricanes, namely Isaac and Sandy, at the flowering stage, sharply reducing their output. Additionally, wind gusts accompanying Hurricane Isaac brought the avocado harvest to a rapid end. As a coping strategy, poor households began harvesting their grapefruit crops in December instead of in February, when the harvest should normally begin. Hurricane Sandy also affected livestock, the main source of savings for poor households. These livestock losses eliminated a source of income for this group of households, which would otherwise have sold off some of their animals in order to assure market access during the lean season or other hardship periods. The loss or forced sale of their small animals has already depleted the livelihood assets of certain households. For the time being, primary coping strategies include increasing their charcoal production, borrowing, and internal migration.

The month of March is generally the main planting season. However, the success of the March growing season is contingent on good rainfall conditions and on the delivery of aid in the form of seeds, which are becoming increasingly scarce. In any event, planted areas are expected to be less than average this year, likely leading to a below-average spring harvest.

Drought conditions and storms (Isaac and Sandy) have created market shortages of locally grown crops such as black beans, bananas, and, to a lesser extent, locally produced milled maize. Imported foodstuffs are widely available, with the exception of red beans, which are imported mostly from the Dominican Republic. While prices for imported staple foodstuffs have been comparatively stable, trends in prices for locally grown crops have been mixed, with prices for certain crops trending upwards. The market price of a bunch of bananas has doubled since last year. Prices for locally grown black beans and maize rose by 40 and 30 percent, respectively, between December 2011 and December 2012. An analysis of price trends between December of last year and January of this year shows a steady upward movement in prices. The price of a *marmite* of local milled maize rose six percent and bean prices shot up by nine percent. The price of pigeon peas has dropped by 15 to 20 percent since the beginning of the harvest, but is still approximately 50 percent higher than in 2011 at the same time of year.

### *Assumptions*

The most likely food security scenario for the period from January through June 2013 is based on the following general assumptions that are specific to these areas:

- Prices for locally grown staples and, more specifically, black beans will rise by another 20 to 25 percent in response to a growing demand during the main planting season (March-April).
- Poor households will have less purchasing power in the first two months of the year with the slowdown in agricultural activities, which is normal during the dry season. Their purchasing power will rebound between March and June with the start-up of farming activities in preparation for the spring growing season, which accounts for 40 percent of the income earned by poor households.
- There is likely to be less demand for farm labor between February and April owing to the poor 2012 harvest and the

resulting reduction in available resources (inputs and cash) for investment in the spring growing season. Thus, poor households will be unable to earn as much income as usual, which will force them to resort to irreversible coping strategies.

- With the earlier than usual start of the lean season and the erosion in their normal sources of income, poor households will face higher than usual levels of capital depletion. They will resort to selling animals (chickens), cutting down fruit trees for charcoal production, and borrowing at usurious interest rates between February and May.
- Child malnutrition rates in the municipalities of Belle-Anse and Baintet are expected to rise between February and May, in line with normal seasonal trends. This year, however, the deterioration in the nutritional situation is likely to begin earlier and be more widespread than usual.
- Emergency farm assistance and livelihood assistance programs will probably be delayed, preventing the maximization of cropping activities and planted areas. However, the eventual start-up of these programs will help gradually strengthen the purchasing power of aid recipients under programs focusing on CFW activities.
- Emergency farm assistance and livelihood recovery programs in the municipalities of Throttle, Belle Anse, Grand Gosier, Marigot, and Anse à Pitres will proceed effectively.

### *Most likely food security outcomes*

Poor crop performance and the high cost of staple foods have sharply reduced both the quantity and the quality of current household food consumption. There will be a steady deterioration in both food consumption and livelihoods of poor households between January and May. The uncontrolled felling of trees for charcoal production, over-fishing, and sales of livestock already reported in certain areas will deplete their natural (forest and water) resources, as well as the productive assets of poor and even middle-income and better-off households. Poor households will be propelled into IPC Phase 3 (food crisis) between February and May. However, the household food security situation will improve in May and June as harvests of grain crops, pulses, and mangos help increase food availability and household income, lifting poor households out of IPC Phase 3 (crisis) and back into IPC Phase 2 (stressed).

## EVENTS THAT COULD CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

**Table 1:** Possible events in the next six months liable to change the outlook

Area	Event	Impact on food security
Artibonite	Increase in the size of green shield bug populations attacking rice fields in Dessalines following the delay in the planting of these crops.	Smaller rice harvest Reduced demand for farm labor Rise in the price of locally grown rice
Nationwide	The various government authorities, political parties, and civil society organizations are able to reach a consensus allowing for the holding of free Parliamentary and local elections accepted by the majority of Haitians.	This could create a favorable investment climate, which, in turn, would help with job creation.
Southern Peninsula	Programs organized by the Ministry of Agriculture are deployed on time and able to provide the country's large farm population with quality inputs.	Planting of larger areas in crops, bringing the size of cropping areas closer to normal; larger harvests
Nationwide	Delay in the beginning of the rains, with a pattern of erratic rainfall throughout the season.	Poor harvest; surge in prices; steady deterioration in the food security situation of poor households
Southeast, Grand Anse, South	Delivery of humanitarian aid without proper targeting or coordination.	This aid is unable to improve food security outcomes among the poor, whose situation will continue to deteriorate.

### About the scenario-building process

To project food security outcomes over a six-month period, FEWS NET develops a set of basic assumptions with regard to possible events, their effects, and likely responses by different stakeholders. FEWS NET analyzes these assumptions in the context of current conditions and local livelihoods to develop scenarios predicting food security outcomes. Typically, FEWS NET reports the most likely scenario.