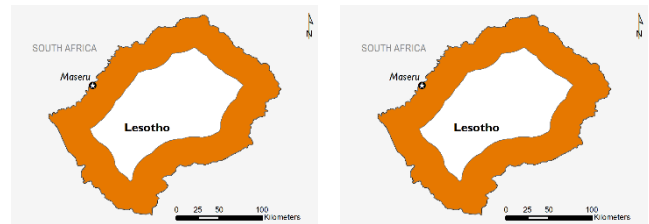


Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes will persist throughout the 2022/23 lean season

KEY MESSAGES

- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are ongoing as the lean season begins, household food stocks from own production are depleted, and market reliance increases. While imports from South Africa are available and support normal market supply, high food prices and below-average income continues to drive low purchasing power and limit households’ access to food. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes will be observed throughout the lean season.
- Above-average rainfall is expected across Lesotho between October 2022 and April 2023. The beginning of the agricultural season is expected to improve agricultural labor opportunities, with on-farm labor opportunities increasing from November onwards throughout the 2022/23 rainy season.
- According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the annual inflation rate in September was 9.2 percent, similar to August and remaining somewhat elevated. Food and fuel price increases primarily drive the high inflation rate. Food prices were generally stable in Maseru between August and September. Despite this stability, maize meal prices were nearly 10 percent higher than at the same time last year and almost 30 percent above the five-year average. In comparison, wheat prices were almost 20 percent higher than in 2021 and nearly 45 percent above the five-year average. The above-average prices limit household access to food by reducing household purchasing power.

Projected food security outcomes, October 2022 to January 2023 (left) and February to May 2023 (right)



- Phase 1: Minimal
- Phase 2: Stressed
- Phase 3+: Crisis or higher

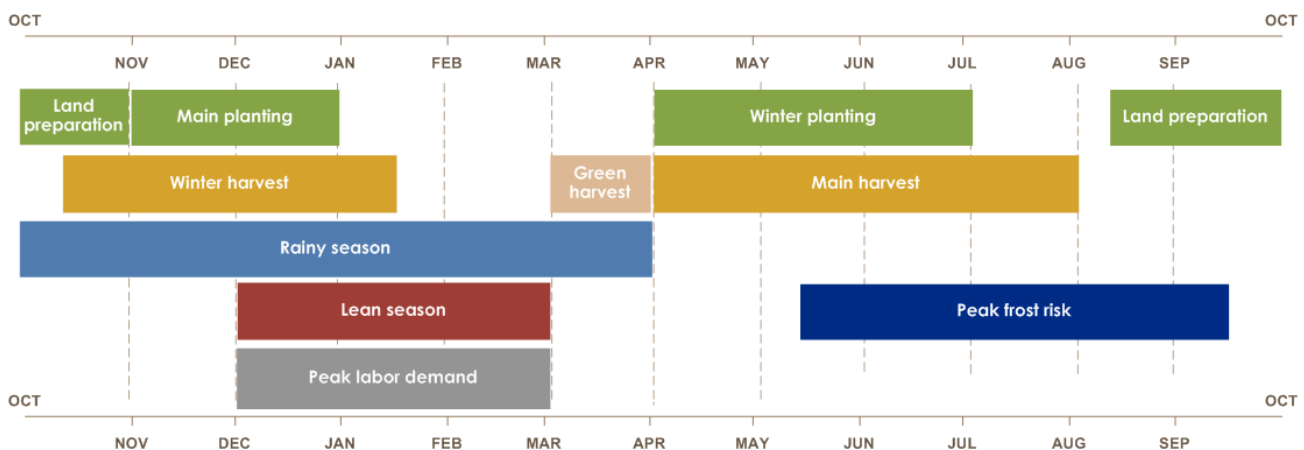
! Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance

Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

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

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR



Source: FEWS NET

ZONE	CURRENT ANOMALIES	PROJECTED ANOMALIES
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Above-average maize meal and maize grain prices Below-average income from labor and remittances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maize meal and grain prices are expected to remain significantly above the five-year average due to price transmission from South Africa Lower-than-normal income

PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH MAY 2023

October marks the beginning of the traditional lean season when most households begin to rely more heavily on market purchases after exhausting stocks of own-produced food. This year, however, due to the below-average harvest, very poor households had depleted food stocks by August and started depending on market purchases one month earlier than normal. Households will continue to be market-dependent until the end of the consumption year in March.

Agricultural land preparation is underway and is expected to continue until November. Very poor households, therefore, rely on agricultural labor activities for income. At the same time, income from off-farm activities is below average as households focus their efforts on agricultural activities.

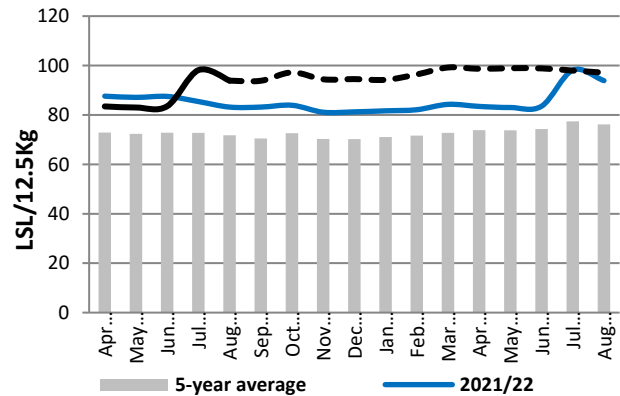
The 2021/22 above-average rainfall season provided livestock with generally good pasture and water availability, contributing to normal livestock body conditions. Farmers who sell their livestock to South Africa are facing market access challenges because of additional vaccination services requirements. Therefore, driving lower-than-normal income from livestock sales. In addition, households that depend on remittances are also experiencing below-average income due to reduced labor opportunities in South Africa, as economic conditions are weaker than usual.

Between October 2022 and January 2023, the price of maize meal is expected to be about 30 percent above the five-year average and nearly 15 percent above their corresponding previous year levels. Below-average production has led to below-average local supply, and the expected price transmission from South Africa, where Lesotho imports maize grain and meal, is driving prices up (Figure 1). Given below-average income levels and above-average food prices, very poor households will face reduced purchasing power and limited access to food. These households are therefore expected to face food consumption gaps leading to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.

February marks the peak of the lean season, while March marks the end of the lean season as the harvest begins. As households transition from the lean season into the harvest season in March, household food access is expected to improve as people start to consume the green harvest. Between April and May, areas in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) are expected to transition to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) as households in these areas will be able to meet their minimum food needs. However, most farming activities are concluded in February, and agricultural labor opportunities begin to decline until the harvest. These households will be unable to meet their non-food needs due to reduced income from labor activities.

Recommended citation: FEWS NET. LESOTHO Remote Monitoring Update October 2022: Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes will persist throughout the 2022/23 lean season, 2022.

Figure 1. Maseru maize meal price projection



Source: FEWS NET based on BOS data

ABOUT REMOTE MONITORING

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