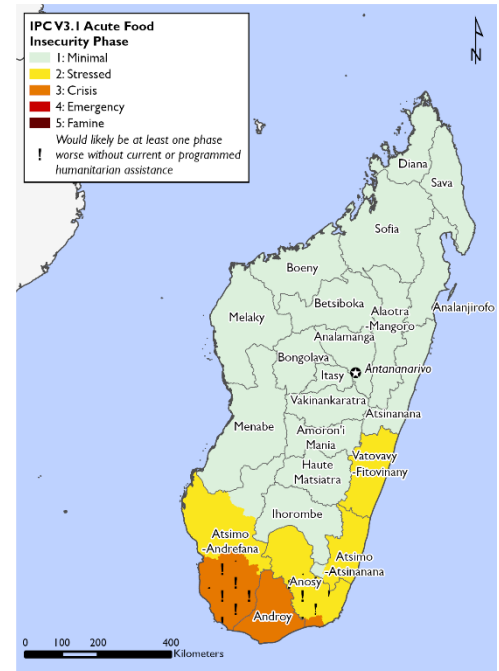


Poor households harvest some cassava early as atypically high needs continue in the Grand South

KEY MESSAGES

- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Crisis! (IPC Phase 3!) outcomes remain widespread in the Grand South as humanitarian assistance continues to mitigate worse outcomes in some southwestern areas. Severe drought and negative impacts from multiple cyclone strikes significantly reduced maize harvests, driving poor outcomes even in the post-harvest period. Furthermore, below-average soil moisture is expected to lead to below-average cassava and sweet production in the southwest, bringing only minimal seasonal improvements and an early start to the annual lean season. As a result, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are likely to emerge in some areas after humanitarian assistance is slated to end in August and households' access to food will further deteriorate with the progression of the lean season, even in areas expected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Along the southeastern coast, areas flooded with the passage of cyclones have yet to recover and are likely to continue experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes throughout the outlook period.
- In the Grand South, the harvesting of cassava typically takes place between August and November. However, as poor households continue to face food consumption gaps following poor maize harvests, they have resorted to harvesting some cassava that has not fully matured as a coping mechanism. There are also reports of reductions in the expected harvest in the southeast due to excess moisture and flooding resulting in rotted roots. Overall, key informants indicate that cassava production will likely be about 25 percent lower than the three-year average in southern and eastern producing regions.
- While seasonal price drops have been observed for most staple foods in recent months, prices remain higher than both last year and the five-year average, demonstrating the rising cost of living for households. In June, prices for dried cassava and local rice declined in Antananarivo but were still 27.8 and 11.6 percent above last year and 19.9 and 7.9 percent above the five-year average, respectively. Meanwhile, maize grain prices were stable compared to June across most monitored markets but remain 10.2 percent above last year and 13.2 percent above the five-year average in Antananarivo.
- Rising gasoline prices are expected to contribute to continued increases in food prices, especially in the Grand South, where markets are dependent on staples being transported long distances from surplus producing areas in other regions, given the significant reductions in harvests. Following a freezing of fuel prices in April, the government raised gasoline prices in July by 43 percent from 4,100 to 5,900 MGA per litre, while the price of diesel increased by 44 percent from 3,400 to 4,900 MGA. High fuel prices may also somewhat negatively affect labor migration to urban areas and to northern provinces for cash crop harvests in northern and eastern producing areas, especially for poor households.

Current food security outcomes, July 2022



Source: FEWS NET

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