An early start of the rainy season in the extreme south is favorable for early crop development

KEY MESSAGES

- Rainfall in the 2019/2020 rainy season is forecast to be below average in southern Madagascar, but average to above average in the central highlands, and above average in the north. This is favorable for national crop production but may be challenging for agriculture in the south.

- Food prices are currently stable throughout the country due to stable market supply and the availability of households’ stocks, particularly in the South.

- Pest infestations may be a determinant of this season’s agricultural production in the south as fall armyworm is now endemic, and Malagasy migratory locusts were reported in the southwest in September.

- In October 2019, poor and very poor households in the most southwest and extreme south districts of Madagascar are experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2), with the impact of humanitarian food assistance in Beloha are experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2!), and households in Ampanihy are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) because of below average staple production and the persistence of high rates of malnutrition.

SEASONAL CALENDAR FOR A TYPICAL YEAR

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.
NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Current situation

Rainy season progress: Rain continued to fall in the Southern and Central Highlands in early October, allowing farmers to transplant young rice crops. In the South, favorable rainfall conditions in July and August improved the maturation of off-season maize and tubers. Rain that continued into early September provided important water for new cassava plants.

Agriculture activities: The new rice campaign has started and in anticipation of the coming rains farmers in rice producing areas are transplanting rice. Cropped areas are expected to be expanded in the Central and Eastern Highlands with the timely arrival of rains, unlike in Western parts where it may be limited. In the South farmers planted peanuts, a new crop for the region, in place of many food crops for three reasons: peanut crops are less infested by pests compared to maize or pulses; its seeds are more accessible and available, demands are higher with the arrival of Chinese collectors in the area.

Staple food availability: Domestically, rice production was estimated at 3.9 million MT in 2018/2019. Although it was 18 percent higher than last year and 9 percent above the 5-year average, rice imports remained high at the time of harvests between June and August 2019 according to OdR. In total, about 120,000 MT of rice were imported – about three times last year’s volume in the same period but 25 percent below the 5-year average. Maize production also slightly increased compared to last year in main producing areas. Nevertheless, an outbreak fall armyworm (Spodoptera Frugiperda, FAW) in Southern and Southwestern Madagascar led to harvest failures in these areas. Consequently, national maize production remained 30 percent below the 5-year average and near last year’s level of 219,000 MT. Cassava production increased in the South, where it is primarily grown, bringing the national production to 2.9 million MT, which is 16 percent higher than last year and 5 percent above the 5-year average. Production of sorghum and millet is increasing, particularly in Androy and Itasy regions, but is still only grown in small areas.

Export cash crops: Black dried vanilla is currently ready to be exported. National revenue from vanilla exports are half of previous year due to the slowing down of international price spike. Even though, vanilla from Northeast is the most demanded with its good quality, Southeastern zones also start to increase its production, particularly the districts of Nosy Varika, Manakara and Mananjary. According to SISAV bulletins, collection activities of cash crops like cloves, coffee, and vanilla improved household incomes and stabilized food security levels in recent months in the Southeast. Farmgate prices of vanilla varied from MGA 300,000 to MG 700,000 in those districts in August 2019.

Macroeconomic context: Current fuel prices are 7 percent lower than last year at the same period. The exchange rate between
the Malagasy ariary and the US dollar also stabilized between April and October 2019, but lost 8 percent compared to October 2018, and 33 percent compared to October 2014. Despite the decrease of fuel prices and the stability of exchange rate, food prices have increased in recent months. According to INSTAN, the Consumer Price Index in Madagascar increased by 0.4 percent on average per month during the first semester of 2019. The national inflation rate was 6 percent between June 2018 and June 2019, and food price inflation was 5 percent but was lower than other inflation like that of electricity and petroleum that both increased by 11 percent. Prices overall in Madagascar have increased by 33 percent in the last 3 years.

**Prices of staple foods:** Prices for both local and imported rice were 10 percent above the 5-year average despite supply being average because of the persistence of general inflation induced by the ongoing depreciation of the Malagasy Ariary. Nevertheless, rice prices are slightly below last year reflecting the improvement in supply. Compared to previous months prices remained stable showing that after a few months from the harvest supply still covers national needs. Maize prices are approximately 20 percent above the 5-year average because of the drop in production in main producing areas like the South. Prices increased by 9 percent compared to the previous year particularly in main cities and in the Southeast where demand is increasing both for manufacturers’ and livestock needs. Nevertheless, prices remained stable compared to the previous month. Tuber prices are near the 5-year average but 15 percent below last year due to improvement in production. Compared to the previous month dried cassava prices continues to decrease while that of sweet potatoes stabilized.

**New state policies:** As part of the "Initiative for the Emergence of Madagascar" Program, the government of Madagascar expects to undertake construction projects in the surroundings of the capital by backfilling 100 ha of suburban rice fields, which normally produce between 3,000 and 4,000 MT of rice. Farmers are encouraged to migrate away from the capital region, and their current landholdings, to pursue their agriculture. Many farmers are resistant to this move.

**Humanitarian Assistance:** Most humanitarian assistance in the South ended in June. Only the FIAVOTA safety net program from FID/WOLD BANK/UNICEF that consists of strengthening education, nutrition and livelihood by transferring conditional cash to beneficiaries is continuing into 2020. The program covers 25 to 45 percent of the total population in Ambovombe, Beloha and Tsihombe. Very poor and poor households received around MGA 50,000 every other month, between April 2018 and August 2019, contributing to more than 50 percent of their food needs. CSR also will continue to support fishing activities in Tsihombe and Beloha through their LOVA project through the end of March 2020. Their FIAROVA project under USAID/OFDA funds is extended until September 2020 and includes general food distribution, food for assets and community-based management of acute malnutrition.

**Assumptions**

The most likely scenario for October 2019 to May 2020 period is based on the following national level assumptions:

- **Rainy season:** According to National Department of Meteorology, southwestern Madagascar will receive below average rainfall between October and December. This will delay the cropping season in the area. Meanwhile, the center of the country will receive average to above average rainfall during the same period which will allow farmers to start planting cereals on time. The north of the country will receive average to above average rainfall during that period, which will be favorable to the development of cash crops for export, like vanilla and litchis. SARCOF and NMME forecasts both expect average to below average rainfall in the South, the West and the Center-South, with an increased chance of below average rainfall in the far south.
• **Rice imports:** Following normal seasonality, imports of rice are expected to increase from October to January because households will start buying rice at markets to substitute for locally grown rice. Imports will slightly decrease after the first harvest of rice in December and January and will increase again between March and April during the lean season in Southeastern Madagascar when demand will increase. Between 20,000 and 40,000 MT are expected to be imported per month to stabilize the rice supply in deficit areas. In total, approximately 390,000 MT of rice will be imported during the 2019/2020 marketing year. This will be similar to last year and about 8 percent above the 5-year average.

• **Staple prices:** Prices of locally produced cereals will continue to increase during the first part of the outlook projection and then will decrease during the harvests that are expected to begin in March. Prices will be similar to last year but will remain above the 5-year average due to the persistence of general inflation and the below average maize production. Imported rice prices will remain stable and near average throughout the outlook period.

• **Labor demand and income:** Local labor opportunities will decrease from October 2019 to January 2020 due to the delayed cereal sowing and then will increase from February to May 2020 during the peanut cropping period. Generally, labor wages will likely follow the normal seasonality and stay low as near normal but will likely increase in ML2 in the South because of the opportunity offered by peanut plantations.

• **Wild food availability:** Tamarind trees have not produced this year and yellow cactus is expected to be less available than usual from October 2019 to January 2020 because most cactus leaves are currently being fed to cattle. Mangoes are expected to be more available than usual and will be highly consumed. Yams and other wild tubers will be less available. Wild food will continue to contribute to an important part of very poor and poor households’ food in Southern Madagascar through the outlook period.

• **Livestock prices in Southern Madagascar:** Sales will likely increase from October 2019 to January 2020 because households will rely more on markets as their own production stock will be depleted. Prices will decrease for cattle and small ruminants compared to the current period because of the lean season. However, prices will be higher than last year and the 5-year average. This will improve household income compared to previous years but still limit food access in the due to the above average food prices.

• **Nutrition in Southern Madagascar:** Based on the regular exhaustive screenings done by the Nutrition Cluster, acute malnutrition will likely increase between October 2019 and January 2020, due to the decrease in food availability and water shortages. Nevertheless, the situation is expected to be better than the 2018/2019 season.

**Most likely Food Security Outcomes**

In the **Extreme south: cassava, maize, and livestock rearing livelihood zone (MG 24)**, food insecurity is expected to be less severe than previous months with the main tuber harvests. Despite the 20 percent above average rainfall during the 2018-19 campaign, agricultural production was below normal. Maize almost completely failed, due to fall armyworm (Spodoptera Frugiperda) infestations. Cassava and sweet potatoes also produced less than normal due to pest outbreaks. Food is mostly accessed through the market, but prices are 30-50 percent lower than this period last year. Markets are well supplied with cassava and sweet potatoes from better-off households’ production or other southern areas (including maize and rice from Betoko). However, cropping patterns during the last season were not typical, as households in the northern part of MG 24, which is usually more fertile, allocated more than the usual area to peanut farming. This crop is mostly farmed by better-off families, and farmgate prices are well below the levels of the previous two years. Livestock holdings increased compared to last year, due to income from above average remittances, cash programs, and cash crop sales, despite livestock market prices that are about twice those of last year. As a result of this in addition to humanitarian assistance, there are minimal gaps in food consumption. Poor households’ dependence on markets is however still high and prices remain above average. Therefore, households in the zone are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity from October 2019 to January 2020. As the harvest period begins in February and March, household food access will improve, and poor and very poor households will face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) from February to May 2020.

In the **Southwest: cassava and small ruminants (MG 23)**, food insecurity also improved compared to previous months due to the harvest period. Moreover, pulses and cereal production was better in Betioky and surrounding communes allowing for better food availability among households and at markets. Nevertheless, the situation remains more severe in Ampanihy. Therefore, the very poor and poor households in the area are currently experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity in October 2019 and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in Ampanihy. Between October 2019 and January 2020, households will depend more on markets while market prices will likely start to increase. Livestock sales will increase while their prices decrease. Food gaps will likely appear but be less than last year at the same period. The alarming nutritional situation in Ampanihy will likely persist mainly due to food gaps and lack of water access. Humanitarian assistance will likely resume but
with low coverage. Therefore, poor and very poor households will continue to face \textbf{Stressed (IPC Phase 2)} in most of the zone and \textbf{Crisis (IPC Phase 3)} acute food insecurity will persist in Ampanihy between October 2019 and January 2020. From February onwards, food consumption will improve in the zone as some maize harvests are expected in March although harvests will likely be below-average. Fresh cassava and sweet potatoes will also start to be eaten in April. Humanitarian assistance will likely be little to none during this period, and poor and very poor households will face \textbf{Stressed (IPC Phase 2)} between February and May 2020.

Local stresses have been identified in Southeastern Madagascar due to above average food prices, but with no major impacts on food security. Therefore, \textbf{households throughout Madagascar} will remain in \textbf{Minimal (IPC Phase 1)} acute food insecurity from October 2019 through May 2020 outside the areas of concerns.

\section*{EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK}
Possible events over the next eight months that could change the most-likely scenario.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Area & Event & Impact on food security \\
\hline
National & Cyclones & The 2019/2020 cyclone season in Madagascar promises to be active and near average. It is expected that 2 to 4 disturbances may occur near Madagascar during the season and 1 to 2 could make landfall on the Malagasy coast between January and March 2020. The evolution of large-scale conditions that modulate cyclone activity in Madagascar suggests that potentially powerful cyclones will likely come from the northwest, which could improve rainfall projections along the western and southwestern parts of the country like MG 09, MG15, MG20 and MG23; but could be harmful in the northeast where rice fields and cash crops could be severely damaged. \\
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\section*{AREAS OF CONCERN}

\textit{Androy Semi-Arid Cassava, Maize and Livestock (MG 24) - Beloha district}

\textbf{Current Situation}

\textbf{Seasonal progress}: The 2018/2019 rainy season in Beloha was better than in 2017/2018 and above the average. In January 2019 cumulative rainfall was 200 mm, twice the average for January. Unfortunately, in some parts of the district’s rainfall was concentrated at the very end of the season, which caused flooding damage to some cassava fields.

\textbf{Staple crop production}: Despite the 20 percent above average precipitation, agricultural production during the last campaign was below average. Maize almost completely failed due to fall armyworm (Spodoptera Frugiperda) infestations. Cassava and sweet potatoes, normally harvested during the off-season, also produced less than average due to pest outbreaks. Sorghum and millet production was recently re-introduced in the area but so far is farmed on a limited scale.

\textbf{Prices of staple foods}: Maize and local rice prices are stable compared to the September 2019 and October 2018 in Beloha. However, imported rice prices are increasing and are higher than last year. Cereal prices in general are above the 5-year average. Dried cassava prices continue to decrease and remain less than last year and the 5-year average. This drop in cassava prices is a relief for poor households’ who are primarily accessing food from markets.
Sources of food: As stocks of cassava will exhaust soon, and sweet potatoes are only expected to last until October, food is mostly accessed at markets. Markets are well supplied in cassava and sweet potato, mostly from the same district (from better-off households’ production) or other southern areas (including maize and rice from Betroka and Tsivory).

Livestock herds: Livestock holdings increased compared to last year and are now above average. Several factors allowed this including above normal remittances (more people migrated during the last few years), cash programs, cash crop sales, and other more diversified activities for richer households (such as poultry farming). This phenomenon is consistent with the adaptation to climate change noticed in other parts of Southern Africa.

Livestock prices: A cow cost MGA 850,000 in July/August 2019, twice the 2018 price (MGA 400,000) and is 60 percent above the 4-year average (MGA 525,000). A goat costs MGA 90,000 in July/August 2019, 80 percent above 2018 price (MGA 50) and 40 percent above 4- year average (Source: SISAV).

Labor wages: Labor wages normally peak between June and September, then start to decrease in October to reach their lowest point in February according to SISAV data. This year, wages have not peaked as much as usual. In August 2019, one day of labor cost around MGA 2,300, which is 20 percent lower than last year and 10 percent below the 5-year average, and which affected household incomes.

Food consumption patterns: According to the preliminary results of CFSAM conducted in July-August 2019, 10 percent of households in Beloha have poor food consumption score and other 71 percent the borderline food consumption score. Outcome Analysis showed 27 percent of livelihood protection deficit and 0 percent of survival deficit.

Water availability and pasture conditions: Water availability, both for people and livestock, has largely improved compared to last year at the same period. Nevertheless, open water sources and underground water’s level is deteriorating following the low season according to the 10th bulletin on drought produced by the EU-funded WASH Cluster. Water prices vary from 200 to 500 Ariary in urban area and 700 to 1500 Ariary in rural area. For municipalities served by Pipeline, the 20-liter can is 120 Ariary. NDVI shows below normal vegetation leading pastoralists to give cassava, sweet potato and leaves to their animals.

Humanitarian Assistance: The FIAVOTA cash transfer program, implemented by WB/UNICEF/FID was active in some communes of the livelihood zone. Each household received MGA 50,000 every other month between April 2018 and August 2019. These cash transfers were an important source of revenue for poor and very poor households in the district, which contributed nearly 40 percent of their total income and allowed them to increase their herd sizes to their current above normal sizes. More than 46,000 people received this cash transfer, which is around 35 percent of the total population of Beloha.
Assumptions

The most likely scenario for the October 2019 to May 2020 period is based on the following zone level assumptions:

- **Agroclimatology**: The National Meteorology Department forecasts an average to slightly below-average rainfall in the district in November and December 2019. Rainfall already started to fall in the district and useful rainfall for agriculture will likely resume in January at normal to above normal level. The NMME forecasts concurs with this forecast. Cumulative rainfall will likely be more than 400 mm by the end of the season.

- **Cropped areas and production**: Tuber cuttings from recent harvests will likely be available to expand cropped areas to near average. Maize cropped areas will likely remain below average due to unaffordable seeds and fair of pest outbreak. FWA treatment is not mastered yet in the zone. production is likely near zero. Nevertheless, with the normal to above normal rainfall in the second part of the outlook period, maize production will likely not near zero but will slightly increase.

- **Staple food prices**: According to FEWS NET price projection, prices of dried cassava and maize will likely stabilize until December. Then it will increase in January, while people will have relied on purchases for longer than normal, to stabilize again between March and May. Dried cassava prices will likely remain 20 percent below 5-year average and 40 percent below last year over the outlook period while maize prices will likely remain near 5-year average although an expected below normal production further the persistence of FAW infestation.

- **Nutrition**: From October to January, the level of acute malnutrition will likely remain stable between October and January 2020 although the beginning of the lean season. Then it will likely increase but will remain “under control”. CRENAS admissions will likely be less than 200 children in the whole district of Beloha within the outlook period.

- **Livestock conditions and prices**: Livestock sales will likely increase for cash to buy food as domestic stock will likely deplete. However, it will likely remain near average. Prices will start decreasing and will likely be 20-30 percent above average for cow and 40-50 percent above average for small ruminants during the first part of the outlook period. From March onwards, prices will likely increase but remains above average for cow and near average for small ruminants.

- **Labor opportunities and wage rates**: Labor opportunities will likely be below normal until January when cereals sewing will likely start. Labor wages will likely follow the normal seasonality: slight increase between June and October, stability from November to December and decrease from January to February. It will likely vary between 2,500 ariary and 3,500 Ariary.
• **Pastureland and water availability:** Pasture conditions are expected to improve after the recent rains. Water availability will also likely be maintained at last year’s level particularly the existence of the new infrastructure. Water prices will remain stable within the outlook period.

• **Humanitarian Assistance:** During next months, the safety nets program will likely continue with same coverage and same amount of cash transfer.

**Most Likely Food Security Outcomes**

No major gap in consumption has been reported in the district for the moment. Moreover, livelihood strategies adopted so far are limited to stress with no decapitalization. Less investment in farming and more in livestock has been noticed. Based on the alert nutritional situation in Beloha and the contribution of cash transfer program, very poor and poor households in Beloha are experiencing **Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity in October 2019.**

Stocks of cassava and sweet potatoes will exhaust in October. As households depend on markets to access food, prices will increase up to 30-40 percent above average, but not to the same high prices as last year. Very poor households will not easily meet their food needs given their limited stocks and low incomes. For poor households, activities related to agricultural will be intensified between November and December with the planting of the new agricultural campaign. Sales of wild foods like mangoes will reappear and sales of staple foods will slightly decrease and will remain below average. Livestock will likely begin to be sold for cash, and livestock prices will decrease. Humanitarian assistance will likely be very limited during the harvest period, so very poor and poor households will be in **Stressed (IPC Phase 2) until January 2020.**

Between February and May 2020, food consumption will improve as very poor will have access to new harvests. However, poor households will likely face consumption gaps, as agricultural production is likely to be below-average and market prices are projected to remain higher than average by 40 to 50 percent. Poor households will increase livestock sales and migrations, with a livelihood protection gap in February and March. A potential coping mechanism for poorer households in the next months is atypical debts. Despite the pulses and maize harvest that will end the lean season, poor households will face **Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes for most of the outlook period from February through May 2020.**

**Mahafaly Plain: Cassava, Goats and Cattle (MG 23) - Ampanihy district**

**Current Situation**

**Seasonal progress:** The 2018/2019 rainy season in Ampanihy was better than in 2017/2018 and above the average. Nevertheless, according to key informants, rain was poorly distributed inside the district and had a delayed start. The eastern and middle parts of the zone received rain for 3 months (January-March, and until June in Ejeda) while southern and western areas received only one month (January or February).

**Recent harvests:** During the 2018/2019 agricultural campaign, farmers in Ampanihy/MG23 mainly planted cassava, maize, pulses, sweet potatoes and peanuts. Tubers and maize are mainly consumed while pulses and peanuts are sold. About 80 percent of farmers planted cassava in October 2018 and harvested beginning in June 2019. Production increased compared to last year thanks to favorable rainfall, however, it remained below normal because cuttings were very expensive at the time of planting so below average areas were planted. Peanuts were sowed by two thirds of farmers in November 2018 and were harvested in March 2019. Production was near average. Most farmers also planted a variety of pulses like cowpeas in November/December 2018, which were harvested in March 2019; and mung beans lately in April 2019 harvested, in June 2019. However, pulse production was below average due to pest and locust infestations. Only about one third of farmers planted maize in November/December 2018 due to the lack of seeds. They harvested in March 2019, but production was near zero due to severe fall armyworm infestations. Sweet
potatoes were also planted by one third of farmers in January 2019 and harvested in March/April 2019. Some farmers could plant off-season sweet potatoes in May and have an ongoing harvest. Production of sweet potatoes was near average.

**Market supplies:** In early September, markets in Ampanihy district were functioning with many sellers of dried cassava but few sellers of maize, sweet potatoes and pulses. Most products were from surrounding communes and some were from other districts like Betioky. Particularly, maize and pulses found at the market were mostly from other districts. No cactus nor tamarind was for sale. Sugar cane was for sale in the Chef-Lieu market but less than last year. Garden green vegetables promoted by some projects like that of ADRA are still available.

**Food access:** Most households indicated that they held only one month of tuber stocks (cassava and potatoes from own production) in September 2019 and so market purchases were not yet common.

**Prices of staple foods:** Staple prices were largely above average in Ampanihy in August 2019 following the below normal production of tubers. Maize sold at markets was from other districts like Betroka or Betioky. Maize prices were 30 percent above last year’s level and 20 percent above the 5-year average in August 2019. Dried cassava prices were twice those of last year and 40 percent above the 5-year average in August 2019.

**Water availability and pasture conditions:** Most households in the district do not have access clean drinking water, in both inland and coastal areas. Water comes from seasonal rivers such as the Linta, Manakara Lahy and Manakara Vavy Rivers. Those rivers have been dry since August and people now dig to access ground water. In town, some dams still have water. Water prices decreased in August compared to May allowing improved household access. WFP is working with a private society, SHIVIN FORAGE, to dig some boreholes in coastal areas of Androka and Itampolo within their garden project. According to the 6th bulletin on drought produced by the Cluster WASH under UE fund, the level of underground water in Ampanihy was stable. NDVI was normal pastureland in northern Ampanihy but alarming in the south. Livestock mainly eat cassava leaves and burnt cactus leaves as pasture are becoming dry.

**Livestock sales:** Cattle herd size is currently below reference year (2017): one middle household holds 20 animals on average compared to 33 three years ago. However, herd size is above reference year for small ruminants: one middle household currently holds 38 goats on average compared to 25 three years ago while one middle household currently holds 23 sheep on average compared to 17 three years ago. Therefore, cow prices are increasing due to the restoration of herd whereas prices of small ruminants are decreasing. On average in early September, a cow costs 550,000 MGA, a goat 55,000 MGA and a sheep 60,000 MGA. Prices of small ruminants, the ones poor households will likely sell first when their food stock will finish, are around 50 percent lower than in June and 30 to 40 percent than in last quarter of 2018.

**Other income sources:** Labor demand has stabilized in Ampanihy since tuber harvests need very little labor and most farmer harvests his own production. This year the only harvest activity that required paid labor was the peanut harvest that was either paid by cash. One laborer was paid above normal wages by cash of MGA 35,000 for 5 days, or by in-kind of 1/5 of the harvests. Currently land preparation for next cropping season is taking place and labor prices vary according to the moisture of the soil. Households are paid once the full piece of land has been worked -between MGA 10,000 and 30,000 per 5 days. Sales of firewood and charcoal occur throughout the year but decrease during the rainy season and were seen in about half of villages in the region in September, which is more than in previous years. No wild food sales of cactus or tamarind were reported in
September, and only some sugar cane and yams. Peanut cropping for sale has increased this year and more than 50 percent of farmers planted them this year. Farmers now prefer peanuts to pulses because they are more pest resistant and pulse seeds are more expensive. A poor farmer grew between 0.5 and 3 bags of 50 kg while a middle/ better off farmer grew 10 to 20 bags. One kilo of peanuts was sold at 2,000-2,800 MGA in March following the harvest.

**Humanitarian assistance:** No food distribution nor school feeding occurred since June 2019. ADRA’s Zina program supporting livelihoods continues.

**Wild foods:** No major consumption of wild foods has been reported so far this year. Tamarind trees have not produced this year. Red cactus was not widely available this year and yellow cactus is expected to be less available than usual during the 2019/20 lean season because most of its leaves are currently being fed to cattle. However, mangoes, which should be available by December, are expected to be more available and more consumed than in the reference year. Yams and other wild tubers also are less available than usual this year.

**Nutrition:** According to the SMART survey conducted at the end of April 2019, the GAM prevalence in Ampanihy was 11.3 percent among under five-year-old children. The situation was worse compared to 2017 when GAM prevalence was 8.5 percent with a Confidence Interval of 6.6-10.8; and compared to 2018 when GAM prevalence was 10.8 percent with a Confidence Interval of 7.2-14.1. According to a key informant from Ampanihy Hospital, the situation in September 2019 remains similarly bad as in early 2019.

**Mortality:** Also, according to April 2019 SMART survey, the retrospective mortality rates from April 2018 in Ampanihy District was 0.61 death / 10,000 / day for the entire population, with a confidential interval between 0.34 and 1.10, and 1.81 deaths/10,000 / day for children under 5, with an interval between 0.83 and 3.86. The retrospective mortality rate among children under five has increased significantly between 2018 and 2019.

**Assumptions**

The most likely scenario for the October 2019 to May 2020 period is based on the following zone level assumptions:

- **Next rainy season:** The National Meteorology Department forecasts an average to below-average rainfall in the district between October and December 2019. First usefully rainfall for agriculture is expected in January when it starts to be normal to above normal. The NMME forecasts concurs with this forecast. Cumulative rainfall will likely be around 400 mm by the end of the season.

- **Agriculture:** Successive years of bad production will restrict poor households’ access to seeds and cuttings. Moreover, the prices of seeds at the market dramatically increase when rainfall usually begins. This will likely limit poor households’ ability to purchase seeds and cropped areas will be below normal.

- **Pest infestations:** FAW is now endemic in the livelihood zone. Its impact on production will depend on how its reproductive cycle is synchronized with crop development, but so far FEWS NET assumes a minor impact on maize and pulses (5-15 percent potential losses). In addition, larvae of the Malagasy migratory locusts were reported in the area on September. Larvae are reportedly in stages 5 and 6, which are close to forming swarms and migrating. Because the direction of this migration is unknown, no assumption regarding production loss can be made. However, this could potentially reduce...
yields and compromise the beginning of the next cropping season as they also may eat the new buds of cereals and legumes. Programs that work to counter locust spread only cover a limited area and have limited resources, so farmers resort to bush fires to control the locust populations.

- **Staple food prices:** According to FEWS NET price projections, maize prices will likely follow typical seasonality with an increase in October, stabilization between November and February, and then will increase in March to be around MGA 1,400. It will likely be above normal but slightly lower than last year. Dried cassava prices will likely increase in October then will return to below MGA 1,100 until the end of the outlook period. It will likely be 35 percent above the 5-year average between October 2019 and January 2020; and 20 percent above the 5-year average between February and May 2020. Prices will likely be 13 percent above last year between October 2019 and January 2020; and 6 percent below last year between February and May 2020.

- **Availability of wild foods:** From October 2019 to January 2020, mango and cactus will likely be available. Mango consumption will likely be above normal and may constitute more than 20 percent of food needs for very poor households. Cactus consumption, however, will likely be below normal since cactus availability is reduced due to overconsumption by cattle.

- **Nutrition:** The level of acute malnutrition in Ampanihy will likely increase starting October due to the entrance to lean season. The situation will likely improve between February and May 2020. No high risk of sudden deterioration of the mortality rate is expected.

- **Livestock conditions and prices:** Livestock sales will start increasing between October and January since households will have depleted their food stocks. Small ruminant sales will increase starting in October to provide income for market purchases as households become more dependent on markets for food. As a result, cattle prices will decrease, but remain higher than last year and two years ago, and small ruminant prices will remain similar to last year. Livestock sales will start to decrease beginning in March and prices will then stabilize. Buyers are from Androy Region, from Tulear or from Norther districts.

- **Income sources:** Labor opportunities will increase to above average levels between October and January during the maize, pulse and peanut sowing period. Labor wages will also be above average. Following normal seasonality, they will stabilize in November-December and decrease in January-February.

- **Food consumption patterns:** Poor and very poor household’s diet is mainly composed of cassava or sweet potatoes consumed alone or with some pulses. Meat is occasionally eaten during burials or when some of the livestock die from disease. Wild food consumption below-average. Vegetable consumption remains stable since households are eating cassava leaves more frequently. Milk consumption is reduced compared to earlier in the year because grass is unavailable. According to the preliminary results of the CFSAM conducted in July-August 2019, less than 10 percent of households in Ampanihy had poor food consumption score and half of them had borderline. A household typically eats 2 meals a day, in the morning and at night. Outcome Analysis showed 100 percent of livelihood protection deficit and 9 percent of survival deficit.

- **Humanitarian Assistance:** WFP is expected to do General Food Distribution in 4 communes out of 19 from October to December 2019 although the lean season may extend until May 2020. All fokontany in the 4 communes will be targeted at 50 coverage in each fokontany. In total, 10 percent of total population in Ampanihy will likely receive food distribution. The ration consists of 40 kilos of rice, 3 kilos of split peas and 1.75 liters of oil say near 40 percent of very poor and poor households’ needs in the zone. The canteen will continue during the next school year and the ratio will likely be similar to the baseline. It will cover the 19 communes of the district but with different modality (207 schools with direct food as previously and 4 will be provided with cash as a cash pilot program). ADRA’s emergency program and ASOTRY’s project both have ended. Current planned and funded humanitarian assistance is likely below needed.

### Most Likely Food Security Outcomes

Most households in Ampanihy are experiencing food consumption gaps, and some survival deficits remain, but livelihood strategies mainly consist of charcoal sales. Given the alarming nutritional situation in Ampanihy, the district is experiencing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity in October 2019.

Between October 2019 and January 2020, staple food consumption will reduce at the end of the harvest period and market prices will increase. Very poor households will experience large food gaps given their limited food stocks and low incomes. Food consumption coping strategies may consist of eating wild food and reducing the number of meals to less than 2 meals a day on average. The livelihood protection deficit will likely remain closer to 100 percent as it is currently, and survival deficit will likely be more than 9 percent. For poor households, activities related to agriculture will be intensified between October
and December when fields are planted. Sales of wild foods like mangoes will reappear, and sales of staple foods will slightly decrease and will remain below average. Livestock sales will also increase, at lower than average prices. Given the “alert” nutritional situation, households in Ampanihy will likely remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between October 2019 and February 2020.

Between February and May 2020, food consumption will improve as the very poor will have access to new harvests and consumption of wild foods will reduce. Sales of wild foods will reduce while sales of staple foods and cash crop production like pulses and peanuts will increase. Agricultural labor will likely be near average while livestock sales will decrease. Therefore, poor and very poor households will likely face Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity between February and May 2020.
**MOST LIKELY FOOD SECURITY OUTCOMES AND AREAS RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE***

Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.0 humanitarian assistance mapping protocols and flags where significant levels of humanitarian assistance are being/are expected to be provided.  

- 🚔 indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average 25–50 percent of caloric needs from humanitarian food assistance (HFA).
- 🚔 indicates that at least 25 percent of households receive on average over 50 percent of caloric needs through HFA. This mapping protocol differs from the (!) protocol used in the maps at the top of the report. The use of (!) indicates areas that would likely be at least one phase worse in the absence of current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

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**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](#).