

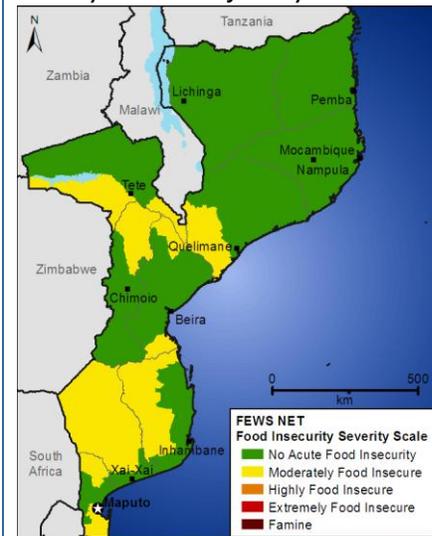
MOZAMBIQUE Food Security Outlook

January through June 2011

Key Messages

- Generally, food security for rural households is currently stable. Yet, nearly 350,000 people from poorer households living in the semi-arid, arid, and remote areas are in need of food assistance until the next major harvest in March. These households have a limited ability to cope and were affected by the dry spells that led to crop failure/losses in the last season.
- In the Zambezi Basin, depending on the magnitude/severity, the floods may negatively affect crop production which may affect food availability for the consumption year (April 2011 to March 2012), although recovery is possible following the floods. Abnormally high food prices will limit the purchasing power of market-dependent households especially after the exhaustion of own food stocks with poor households needing external assistance until March. From April through June moderate levels of food insecurity will continue, but small improvements will occur.
- In the Limpopo Basin, high food prices, floods, and/or poor distributed rainfall will likely limit access to food until the next main harvest in March/April. Purchasing power will continue to be problematic as staple food prices remain above-average. This will undermine access to food through market purchases, especially for poorer households that depend on markets and external assistance will be needed until March. Other areas of concern include the Maputo, Incomati, Save, Búzi and Púngoè Basins in southern and central zones.
- In the districts vulnerable to strong winds and cyclones, such as those along the coastal areas of Inhambane, Sofala, Zambézia, Cabo Delgado, and Nampula provinces, there is a probability of occurrence of cyclones until April. Cyclones with high winds, heavy rains, and storm surges on the coast may cause potential loss of life and damage to property, communications, and infrastructure. High winds can impact the area with flying objects, damage to structures, destruction of standing crops, damage to orchards and trees, and transportation blockages due to fallen trees or debris. As a result, households may become temporarily food insecure by losing their stocks and having limited access to markets.

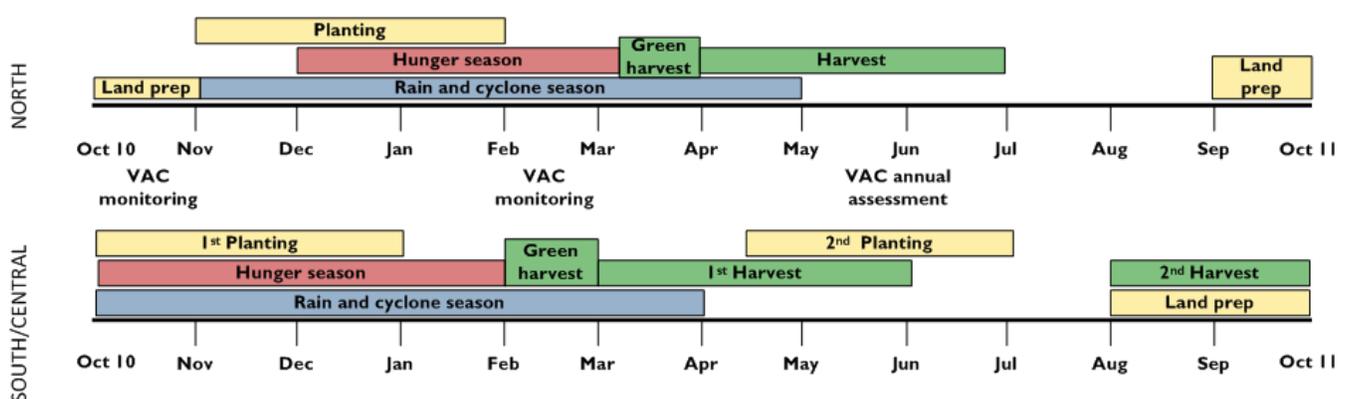
Figure 1. Current estimated food security outcomes, January 2011



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

Seasonal calendar and critical events timeline



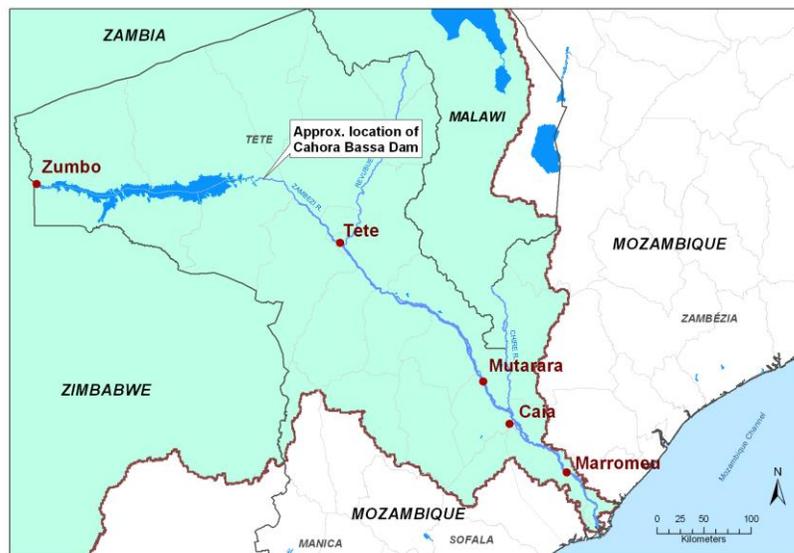
Source: FEWS NET

Most likely food security scenario, January through June 2011

Localized areas of moderate food insecurity are still present in parts of the country that were affected by the 2009/10 season's drought and floods. The Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN)/Vulnerability Assessment Group (GAV) estimated in August that up to 350,000 people from poorer households (mostly living in the semi-arid, arid, and remote areas with limited ability to cope) are in need of food assistance until the next major harvest starting in March. The World Food Programme (WFP) lacks sufficient resources to fully assist the population in need. However, starting this January, WFP and its partners will be able to assist food insecure people in the ten districts which were the worst affected by the dry spells that led to crop failure/losses. A total of 107,000 beneficiaries will receive monthly assistance through a program combining community asset creation activities and relief. This assistance will end in March, and depending on resource availability, the assistance could extend to the other districts. Households in semi-arid areas are consuming the remains of their own production and the available seasonal fruits and vegetables complemented with market purchases. However, staple food prices including maize, rice, beans, and groundnuts are still above-average, limiting the level of access to food in markets. In Maputo, a reference market in the south, monthly prices of maize in December were 28 percent above the five-year average. In the center of the country, the difference between the actual and the average maize price is still significant in some places like in Manica where December maize prices were 42 percent above the average. In the north, the difference between the actual price of maize and the average has remained unchanged, with the actual price around 27 percent higher than the average.

According to the information from the National Directorate of Water (DNA), on December 13, the water levels in Marromeu and Caia (Figure 2) had gone beyond their respective alert levels, and in late December, Mutarara was also above the alert level. From there water increased steadily until reaching the highest level in Mutarara on December 31st, followed by Caia on January 1st, and Marromeu on January 3rd. Afterwards, water levels were below the alert level. The three peak water levels mentioned above have caused river water to overflow and inundate the flood plain areas downstream on the Zambezi River. The flash floods have temporarily cut-off nearby roads and destroyed crops, especially in the islands, but no deaths have been reported. It is still early in the flood season, requiring close monitoring from all humanitarian actors and the specialized

Figure 2. Location of Zumbo, Tete, Mutarara, Caia, and Marromeu along the Zambezi River



Source: FEWS NET

agencies. Púngoè Basin was also on alert with oscillatory levels in Púngoè-Sul where water levels have exceeded the alert level three times with localized inundations in the flood plain areas where recently planted crops were affected. The Limpopo Basin is now under alert as the Chókwe Hydrometric station has exceeded the alert level of five meters. There is a high risk of flooding downstream in the Limpopo Basin (especially in the lowlands of Guijá, Chokwe, Chibuto, and Xai-Xai) due to heavy local rainfall combined with increased inflows from South Africa and increments of discharge from the Massingir Dam. The discharge from Massingir on December 27th was around 120 cubic meters per second and as of January 17th the discharge reached 2,000 cubic meters per second - an increase of 1,700 percent in 20 days. Excess water is also occurring further south, particularly in the Incomati and Maputo Basins. Both basins have already reached their alert levels in Magude and Madubula which have displaced local populations and damaged crops near the river banks and in flood plain areas.

Given the potential for floods in various river basins in the southern and central zones of the country, on January 25th the Council of Ministers declared an *Institutional Red Alert*. The *Institutional Red Alert* aims at establishing an effective and coordinated harmonization of various actions from humanitarian actors, both government and partners, in the process of

providing humanitarian assistance to the affected people. Under the *Institutional Red Alert*, the National Center of Emergency Operations (CENOE) will work round the clock with key government institutions and partner representatives sitting at CENOE. It should be noted that the *Institutional Red Alert* differs from a *National Emergency Situation* which can be declared by the President following a proposal from the Coordinating Council for Disaster Management (CCGC) chaired by the Prime Minister.

On the other hand, the onset of the rains brought much needed relief to drought-stricken areas in the southern and central zones. Water is increasingly available for livestock and human consumption and crops are developing well, except in areas where fields were inundated by excessive rains/floods. The improved access to water has also reduced the time spent by households fetching water and made more time available for tending fields. In the north, the rains have started and there have been enough for cropping needs. Given the favorable rains and extent of planting thus far, it is likely that the current cropping season will be more productive than last year’s cropping season.

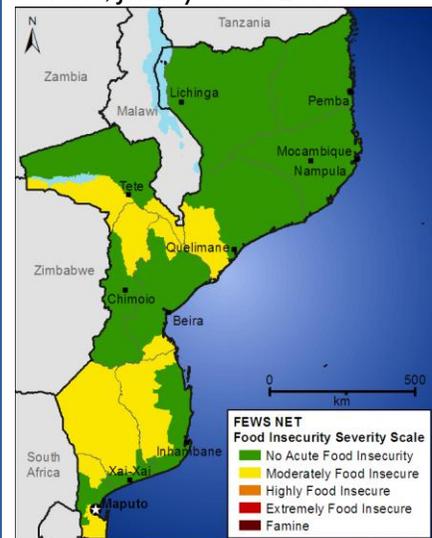
Two areas of concern were identified for the outlook scenario from January through June: parts of the Zambezi Basin and parts of the Limpopo Basin

For the Zambezi Basin, SETSAN/GAV has estimated 89,190¹ people (mostly poorer households in the semi-arid, arid, and remote areas with limited ability to cope) will require food assistance until the next harvest in March. Currently no food aid has been delivered to the identified food insecure people. WFP will start assisting the most vulnerable people this January in Caia, Mágoe, and Tambara districts which were the worst affected by the dry spells that led to crop failure/losses during the 2009/10 cropping season. Two shocks are likely to affect livelihoods in Zambezi Basin households, namely, floods and abnormally high food prices. There is a high chance for floods in the January through March period, as the global models show that the 2010/11 season will be influenced by La Niña conditions. Historically, during La Niña events, the southeastern region of Africa experiences wetter than normal conditions. The level of damage will depend on the magnitude of the floods, but there are chances that there could be moderate to severe flooding and this will significantly affect market access and prices. Severe flooding in the outlook period could be similar to 2001 or the recent 2008 floods where more than 280,000 people were affected. However, given that during the 2007 and 2008 floods most people were permanently evacuated to secure places, the impact of another flood would be less severe. Current evidence shows that river levels are already increasing in the Zambezi Basin and most hydrometric stations are already on alert or above the alert level. Discharge from the Cahora Bassa Dam is occasionally increased incrementally as needed. On the other hand, abnormally high food prices may reduce food access for very poor and poor households and for middle-income households especially during the remainder of the lean season (until February) when most food reserves will have been exhausted and most households will turn to markets as the main source of food.

For the Limpopo Basin, the August GAV assessment has estimated nearly 40,720² people requiring food assistance from now until March and assistance will be delivered in Mabalane and Mabote districts. Possible shocks for this area include continued high food prices which may reduce food access for very poor and poor households, especially following the exhaustion of food reserves when most households turn to markets as their main source of food. The high food prices,

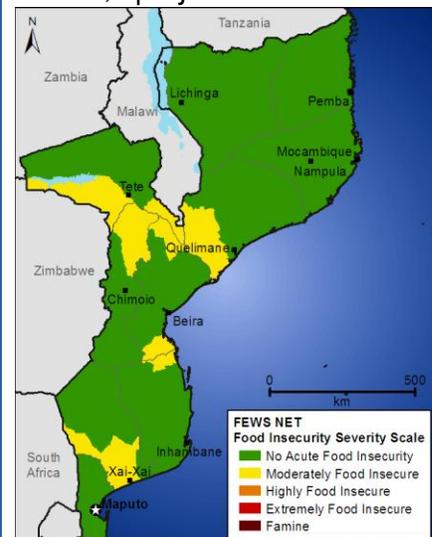
¹ This figure refers to this area of concern only.
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Figure 3. Most likely food security scenario, January-March 2011



Source: FEWS NET

Figure 4. Most likely food security scenario, April-June 2011



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on FEWS NET’s Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

beyond the typical seasonal patterns, may be a result of growing pressure from the milling and feed industries, increased cost of fuel, inflation, and successive shocks, particularly drought, during the past five years. A second potential shock is flooding which may occur due to the influence of La Niña conditions. Possible areas to be affected may include the lowland areas of the Limpopo River in Massingir, Guijá, Chókwe, Bilene, Chibuto, and Xai-Xai districts. Lastly, dry conditions are also possible during the main agricultural season (January-March) or during the second season (April-August). Crop production losses may be highest in maize-dependent areas such as the Upper Limpopo Zone and Lower Limpopo Baixa Sub-Zone.

Under the flood scenarios in both the Zambezi and Limpopo Basins, reduced agricultural labor opportunities in flooded areas may lead to less income for very poor and poor households who depend on those opportunities for income. However, this may be partially off-set by increased opportunities in areas on higher ground which will not be affected by floods. The impact from floods may also include total or partial destruction of roads, bridges, and other infrastructure, potentially resulting in a doubling of staple food prices (compared to the previous year) due to constrained access to markets and the resulting undersupply of food. A period of acute emergency may last for two or more weeks with an initial focus on search and rescue, particularly for the Limpopo Basin, and evacuation operations may be required for displaced populations. An emergency period with significant displacement could last for one to two or more months depending on the magnitude/severity of the flooding. Additionally, flooding will negatively affect the quality of drinking water for affected communities forcing them to consume contaminated water which may lead to disease outbreaks and the spread of cholera, diarrhea, and skin diseases in both areas of concern. Food prices will continue to remain above-average and may increase. Access to food in markets by very poor and poor households will remain difficult, forcing them to employ atypical coping strategies in order to meet their minimum food requirements such as consumption of improper food and drinking water. In general, the recovery phase should get under way by April-May with the second season planting taking place immediately following the water recession with higher than normal expected yields due to adequate content of moisture in the newly exposed soil.

In anticipation of supply shortfalls, additional supplies from neighboring markets will flow into local markets from January to March if the infrastructure is not completely destroyed. Evacuation and provision of humanitarian assistance including shelter, food aid, and health and sanitation care may be necessary. Food aid will only be required in those areas directly and adversely affected by flooding. It is important to note that just because an area suffered crop losses from flooding does not mean it will necessarily need food aid. Key factors which determine the need for food aid are: access to highland areas (away from floods), crop production, ability to purchase food, assistance from relatives or friends, and the ability to plant second season crops. Under emergency situations, inputs must immediately be freely distributed to help in quick recovery. Government and partners will provide agricultural inputs through various mechanisms including Input Trade Fairs where selected beneficiaries are provided with subsidized inputs. For households who have relatives working in urban areas and in South Africa, remittances will likely increase. From April to June, the post-recessional water farming will enable a substantial recovery of crop production for all wealth groups. Free distribution of seeds will be crucial for massive planting in the moisture-rich soils. Markets will start functioning and economic and agricultural activities will progressively return to normal. It is assumed that second season crops will be planted and that farmers will have access to seeds and tools, either obtained through their own efforts or provided as part of the emergency response.

Outside of the flood-affected areas, from January to March, most crops cultivated in the rain-fed areas away from the lowlands will not be affected by floods although heavy rains or poor rains may reduce crop yields. Poor households will rely on markets but high prices will limit their purchasing power. To complement the deficits, these households will likely employ coping strategies including: selling natural/forest products such as grass, building poles, firewood, producing and selling charcoal, resorting to informal labor, and hunting. Also, these households will sell small domestic animals, especially poultry, and small livestock such as goats and pigs. Better-off households may be able to draw down on extra stocks, or sell a few animals to obtain enough food. Able-bodied household members will seek casual labor especially in land preparation and planting. Taking into account that the current scenario period follows a period of severe drought in the two zones, lack of water will be minimized. Agricultural input assistance will help households to plant on time and increase the planting areas. Food assistance will be necessary to mitigate identified pockets of food insecurity according to the SESTAN/GAV recommendations. A combination of ongoing social safety-net programs and emergency food assistance will be part of the response especially for the poorest and most vulnerable households without livestock who will not be able to meet their food needs and may require outside assistance. This includes households headed by elders, widows, and children. In February green harvest crops will start to become available, and it is expected that from April to June households will benefit from the newly harvested crops.

Tropical cyclones

In the districts vulnerable to strong winds and cyclones, such as those along the coastal areas of Inhambane, Sofala, Zambézia, Cabo Delgado, and Nampula provinces (although forecasts for cyclones are still unavailable for the Southwest Indian Ocean Basin), there is always a probability of the occurrence of cyclones. On average, one cyclone hits Mozambique per year and tropical disturbances of a lesser magnitude hit three to four times per year between November and March. The most frequent destination of cyclones is the coastal area between Nampula and Inhambane provinces. A cyclone’s high winds, heavy rains, and storm surges on the coast cause potential loss of life and damage to property, communications, infrastructure, and crops. A cyclone will induce flooding that could cause drowning of humans and animals, flood damage to structures, possible landslides, damage to crops (especially tubers), and erosion. A cyclone is also associated with the occurrence of storm surges which can cause rapid flooding near the coastline, scouring and erosion of topsoil, and increases in the salinity in sub-surface water which destroys most crops. In the event of a storm or cyclone, the majority of households will remain food secure from January to March, a period at the end of the cyclone season when historically the impacts of cyclones are less severe or no longer felt. The poorest households in particular may face acute food shortages. Necessary interventions would likely include provision of shelter, food, water, and sanitation services and facilities. Self recovering and assisted households will be able to meet their food security requirements in the short-term period and in the short to medium-term they will be able to recover their destroyed houses and livelihoods.

Other areas of concern

Localized floods are also occurring and/or expected in other river basins in Mozambique, especially in the southern and central regions where rainfall forecasted for January-March indicates increased chances for above-normal to normal rainfall. Several weeks of torrential rainfall in southern/central Mozambique, where rainfall surpluses are over 150 mm, has brought rivers above alert levels along the Umbeluzi, Incomati, Maputo, Buzi, Pungoe, and Save Rivers, leading to downstream flooding. Rising water levels are also being caused by inflows from neighboring countries especially Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

According to the information from the National Directorate of Water (DNA) presented at the CENOE on January 26th, the river level in the Maputo Basin on January 25th was 53 cm above the alert level of 3.5 meters with a stationary trend. The river level in the Incomati Basin measured in Magude Station was 36 cm above the alert level of five meters with an upward trend. In the Pungoe Basin, measurements at Inhazonia and Mafambisse indicated 76 cm and 119 cm above the alert level, respectively. The alert level in the two stations is 5.5 and six meters, respectively. Buzi and Save were stable and below their respective alert levels.

Table 1. Less likely events over the next six months that could change the above scenarios

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Zambezi Basin and Interior of Gaza and Inhambane provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traders do not respond as anticipated and no additional stocks flow to the deficit areas. • Inadequate input supply. • No adequate response of humanitarian assistance. • No occurrence of floods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local markets would be undersupplied, pushing food prices higher than current expectations. Food deficits, especially for poor households, would be larger, particularly late in the peak of the lean season. • Inadequate input availability will prevent households from benefiting from the expected favorable agro-climatic conditions. • Failure to respond in a timely manner will cause poor households to begin employing negative and even extreme coping strategies, including consumption of improper foods on a large scale such as wild foods that are highly toxic. • No emergency. Typical livelihoods are maintained.