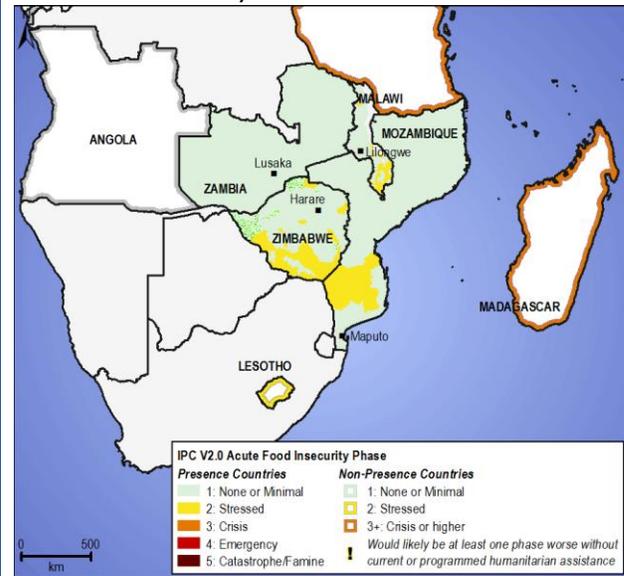


Early season moisture deficits in parts of South Africa, Angola, and Zambia

KEY MESSAGES

- The onset of the seasonal rains is late in northeastern South Africa and neighboring Lesotho, southern parts of Angola, Swaziland, and in western areas of Zambia. For most countries in the region, seasonal rains typically begin in November. National and International forecasts predict low rainfall during the October to December period, which could lead to an erratic or delayed start to rainfall. The ongoing El Niño is forecast to continue until mid-2016, increasing regional concerns that several countries will experience below-average rainfall during the season.
- Poor households in maize deficit areas are well into the lean period and have been relying on market purchases for an extended period this season. Staple food prices in several countries continue to increase, reducing poor household purchasing power. Humanitarian assistance began in parts of Zimbabwe, but has not started in Malawi. Informal trade flows between Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are strong.
- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity outcomes are currently taking place in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar. Poor households in cereal deficit areas have depleted their own food production stocks and are facing limited labor opportunities. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to continue in these countries through March 2016 in the absence of humanitarian assistance. Some areas in Zimbabwe will improve slightly and will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) in the presence of humanitarian assistance.

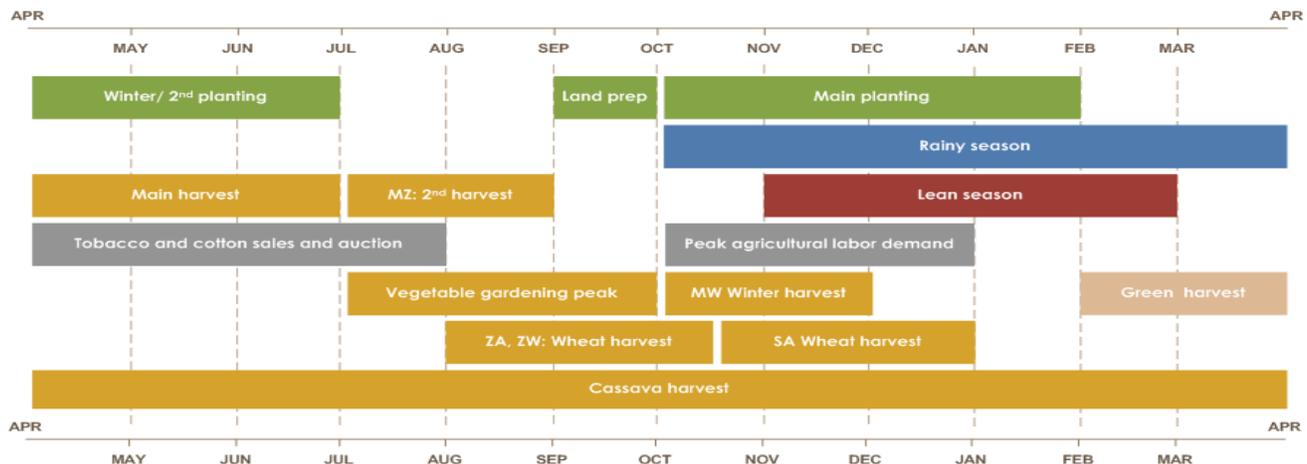
Current food security outcomes, October 2015.



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit [here](#) for more on this scale.

SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR



OUTLOOK BY COUNTRY

Malawi

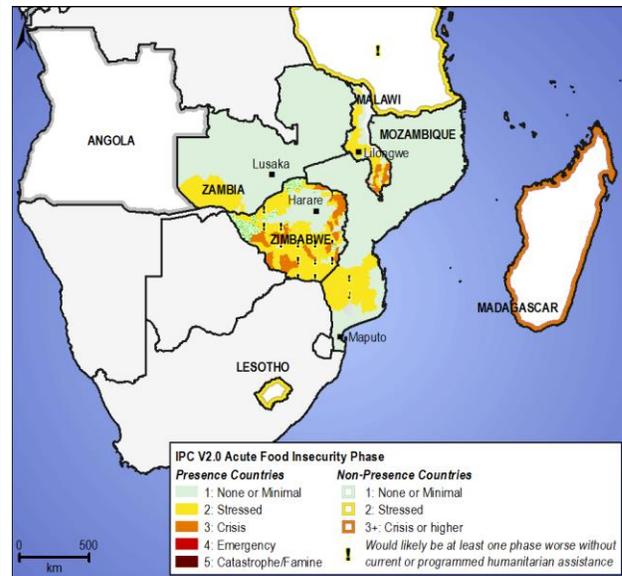
- Between January and March, an estimated 2.5 million people will face acute food insecurity in 25 out of the 28 districts across the country. Assistance was originally planned to start in October, however Malawi’s 2015/16 emergency response assistance program remains underfunded. The start date for this assistance is unknown at this time.
- Malawi has recorded very high maize prices since March/April of this year and prices are expected to continue to increase until the next harvest. Households that usually hire labor are expected to hire less over the next six months due to the poor production during the previous season and the likelihood of erratic or late rains from October to December due to the current El Niño. Increased competition among poor and very poor household for income opportunities, combined with maize prices that are well above average is expected to constrain food access.
- National production and food stock estimates for the 2015/16 season indicate that the country is facing low food supplies. Excluding projected imports, the food gap is over 300,000 MT. Despite the registered import increases, the volume of cross border maize imports is too low to significantly increase national food stocks.

To learn more, read the complete [Malawi Food Security Outlook](#).

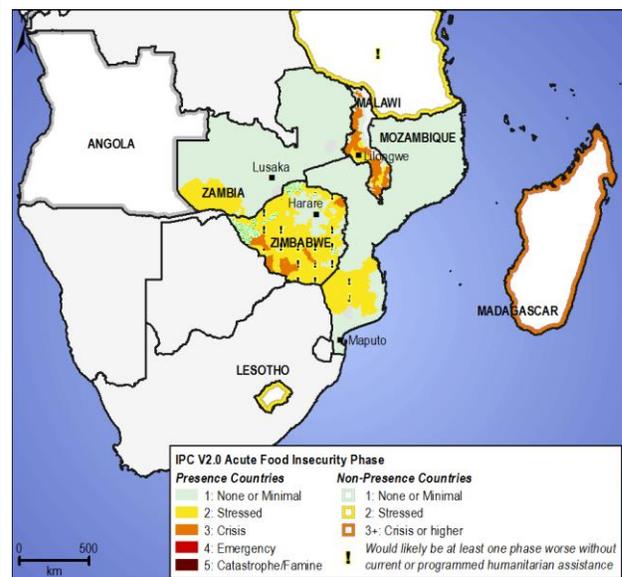
Mozambique

- Currently, Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes are generally found across the country. However, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes prevail in the areas of concern in some semi-arid areas, including districts in Gaza and Inhambane provinces and Sofala province. Social safety-net programming and humanitarian assistance is currently ongoing in the areas of concern and is expected to continue until the next harvest in March/April 2016.
- From October to December 2015, Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes will continue throughout most of the country, with the exception of areas in the interior of Gaza, Inhambane, and southern Sofala provinces, where Stressed (IPC Phase 2 and 2!) outcomes will occur. From January to March 2016 the upcoming rainfall season will likely improve the water shortages in the areas of concern, but poor households will continue to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2 and 2!) until the harvest in March/April.

Projected food security outcomes, October-Dec. 2015.



Projected food security outcomes, Jan.-March 2016.



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. Visit [here](#) for more on this scale.

- Cereal volumes are below average in most markets and prices are well above the five-year average, limiting purchasing power for poor households. However, stocks of maize meal, a preferred maize grain alternative, are normal in markets and prices are stable and near average

To learn more, read the complete [Mozambique Food Security Outlook](#).

Zambia

- Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes will continue in most parts of the country through March 2016. Large carry-over stocks from 2013/14 will help ensure adequate national supply as many households are exhausting their staple food stocks and will become increasingly dependent on market purchases for food as the lean season commences in November.
- Maize prices have escalated due to increased market demand from both local consumers as well as neighboring countries especially Zimbabwe and Malawi. Wholesale prices have risen by at least 50 percent in October with respect to the height of the marketing season in August. Although the retail prices (grain and meal) had lagged, significant increases have been observed in October, which is eroding household purchasing power exacerbated by the significant local currency depreciation.
- Given the high likelihood of below normal rainfall in southern half of the country during the coming production season, coupled with the high input prices, it is likely that farmers will cut back on area planted. This is likely to result in lower production by small-scale farmers

To learn more, read the complete [Zambia Food Security Outlook](#).

Zimbabwe

- In the southern areas of Matabeleland, Masvingo, Midlands, and Manicaland Provinces, the majority of poor households are predominantly in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), but with the recent start of lean season food assistance, many areas will be Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) between October and March, in the presence of assistance.
- The food security situation between January and March 2016 will largely depend on the performance of the rainfall season and levels of humanitarian assistance, especially in the south.
- Most northern areas are expected to experience Minimum (IPC Phase 1) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) outcomes, in the presence of assistance. Lean season food assistance is planned to increase in the south during this quarter in terms of both targeted areas and beneficiaries. The planned scale of assistance will result in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes improving to Stressed (IPC Phase 2!), in the presence of assistance.

To learn more, read the complete [Zimbabwe Food Security Outlook](#).

Countries Monitored Remotelyⁱ

Lesotho

- Forecasts for the ongoing El Nino to persist through February, and associated impacts on rainfall in Lesotho suggest average to below-average rainfall is likely during much of the agricultural season. This is likely to affect agricultural activities and reduce labor income during the peak of the lean season.
- Staple food prices will likely remain high through the lean season due to rises in food prices in South Africa, which is the main source of food for Lesotho. This is likely due to a rise in demand resulting from the regional cereal deficit.

- Depleted stocks, a decline in remittances, reduced income from casual labor, reduced purchasing power will likely result in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) for some very poor and poor households in Lesotho. However, the most of Lesotho is expected to maintain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity.

To learn more, read the complete [Lesotho Remote Monitoring Report](#).

Madagascar

- In Androy, Atsimo Andrefana and parts of Anosy Regions, staple food production was significantly below average for the third consecutive year. Given the early exhaustion of main food stocks, limited labor opportunities, and well above-average staple food prices, poor households in several districts will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from November through at least March 2016.
- Due to the increasing pressure on livelihoods and the unavailability of income opportunities, poor households in in Tsihombe and Bekily are already in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), which will likely continue through March 2016.
- The high likelihood for the ongoing El Niño to continue through the end of the rainy season is likely to result in average to below-average rainfall over southern Madagascar, reducing crop production and associated agricultural labor opportunities.

To learn more, read the complete [Madagascar Remote Monitoring Report](#).

EVENTS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE OUTLOOK

Table 1: Possible events over the next six months that could change the most-likely scenario.

| Area | Event | Impact on food security outcomes |
|---|--|---|
| Cereal deficit areas | Reduced regional cross-border trade. | Market supplies will significantly decrease in deficit areas, resulting in atypical cereal price increases. |
| Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Lesotho | Increased funding levels for humanitarian assistance and response programming. | Poor and very poor households food gaps will be significantly reduced and household acute food insecurity will decrease to Minimal (IPC Phase 1). |
| Entire region | Fairly distributed seasonal rainfall, similar to what happened during the 1997/98 El Niño. | Poor household income levels from agriculture labor would return to normal due to normal levels of work opportunities. The timing for the green harvest and main harvest would be on time, improving food availability for households that are Stressed and in Crisis during the peak of the lean season. |

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report presents FEWS NET's most forward-looking analysis for acute food security in this region for the outlook period stated above. It is based on the work of regional and national analysts who consider current conditions and local livelihoods in order to develop regional and national level assumptions about the future. The analysts compare these assumptions, their possible effects, and the likely responses of relevant actors to arrive at a most likely scenario for each country. Typically, FEWS NET reports the most likely scenario. Click [here](#) for more information.

ⁱ With remote monitoring, an analyst typically works from a nearby regional office, relying on a network of partners for data. Compared to countries above, where FEWS NET has a local office, reporting on remote monitoring countries may offer less detail.