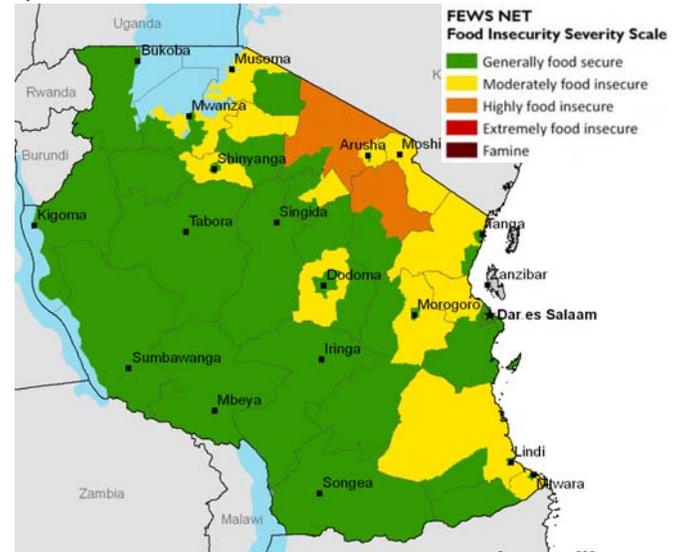


## TANZANIA Food Security Update

September 2009

- Food security has continued to deteriorate in the northern and northeastern parts of bimodal areas that have experienced extended dryness due to the poor performance of the 2008/09 *vuli* and 2009 *masika* rains. Food security conditions have also worsened in the northern coastal, southern coastal, and central regions where seasonal rains were inadequate for crop growth. In the areas that received sufficient rainfall (the southern highlands, western, and northwestern areas), food security has generally remained stable. The prices of major staple foods remain above the five-year averages, which have constrained food access for most market-dependent households.
- The Food Security Information Team (FSIT) is currently carrying out a rapid vulnerability assessment (RVA) to establish the extent and number of food insecure households and interventions required in 65 districts in 16 regions.
- The Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA) has issued its seasonal forecast for the September to December period, which indicates a high probability of normal to above normal rainfall over much of the country. Below-normal to normal rainfall, on the other hand, may be experienced in parts of southern Tanzania, especially Ruvuma, one of the main cereal growing areas, and Lindi and Mtwara, which are marginal agropastoral areas. TMA has also reported that the El Niño event could lead to excessive soil moisture, flooding, and destruction of transport infrastructure, which would affect food distribution and result in food shortages in many areas.

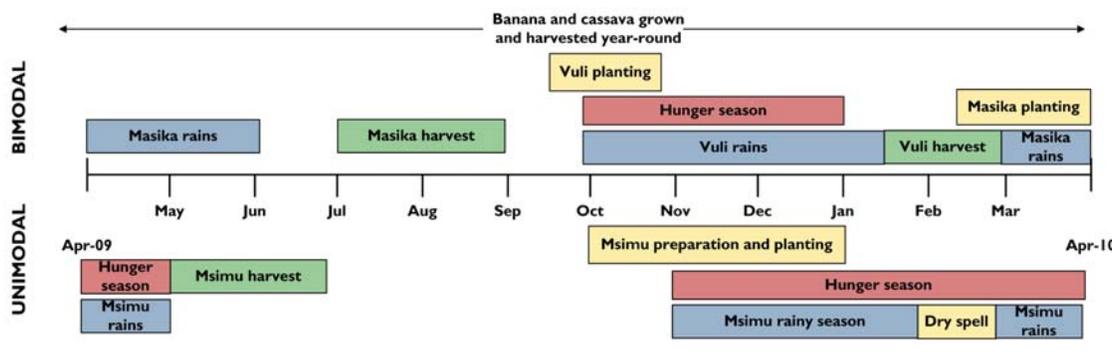
**Figure 1.** Current estimated food security conditions, September 2009



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

Source: FEWS NET

## Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

## Food security overview

Food security has continued to deteriorate in the northern and northeastern parts of bimodal areas that have experienced extended dryness since 2007, mainly in the highly food insecure pastoral areas of Ngorongoro, Simanjiro, Longido, and the lowlands of Monduli (Figure 1). Extended dryness has led to deterioration of pasture and water for both livestock and domestic uses, causing animal body conditions and milk production to deteriorate as a result and increasing vulnerability to disease. In Ngorongoro, some animal deaths have been reported due to disease.

Pastoralists have been migrating to parts of Kilindi and Handeni districts in search of pasture and water, thus intensifying food insecurity for family members left behind without milk supplies and income to buy food. There is also a high influx of animals from Kenya in search of pasture and water, especially in Ngorongoro, Simanjiro and Siha districts in the north, which has increased pressure on water and pasture, and increased the spread of animal diseases. The extended trekking distances and high prices of water in Simanjiro and Kiteto districts have increased the risk of human disease as hygiene conditions deteriorate. Water is normally free and within normal trekking distances of pastoralists. However, in Simanjiro district, water is now sold at 20-30TZS per 20 liters, while in Kiteto district the price ranges between 100 to 700TZS per 20 liters.

The northern coastal areas where seasonal rains were inadequate for crop growth are moderately food insecure. The eastern and southern parts of Lake Victoria, especially the lowland areas, are moderately food insecure since they also received inadequate rainfalls. In these areas, the supply of cassava, which is an important buffer crop in many areas and an important staple in Lake Victoria zone, Kigoma, Coast, Lindi and Mtwara regions, continues to be affected by Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) and Cassava Brown Streak Diseases (CBSD). Food insecurity in these bimodal areas is expected to remain at moderate levels until the *vuli* harvest in January.

The central semi-arid region of Dodoma in the unimodal areas also did not receive adequate rains for crop production during the *msimu* season and is thus moderately food insecure. The most affected areas are Chilonwa and Bahi districts. The southern coastal regions of Lindi and Mtwara, particularly Nanyumbu and Masasi districts in Mtwara region, also did not receive sufficient moisture for crop production. These areas are not expected to receive rains soon and the situation will continue to deteriorate. The multi-agency Food Security Information Team (FSIT) is currently carrying out a rapid vulnerability assessment (RVA) to establish the extent and the number of food insecure households and interventions required in 65 districts in 16 regions. The exercise is expected to last until the end of September.

As the hunger period approaches in both bimodal and unimodal areas (the hunger period normally starts in October and ends in January in bimodal areas, and runs from November to May in unimodal areas), household food stocks are diminishing and many households rely on markets to source food. The situation may increase pressure on markets and increase prices, thus continuing to constrain the ability of poor households to access food.

In the unimodal areas of the southern highlands (Ruvuma, Mbeya, Iringa, and Rukwa), maize production was good due to sufficient rainfall during the *msimu* season. Although these surplus-producing areas continue to supply food to markets in areas with deficit production due to inadequate rainfall, purchasing power is constrained in deficit areas due to lower incomes from reduced casual agricultural labor opportunities. Pastoralist incomes are also limited due to deteriorated animal conditions.

The National Food Reserve Agency is continuing to purchase maize in Ruvuma, Rukwa, and Iringa regions at an average price of 300 TZS/kg, higher than the average market prices in these areas. NFRA intends to purchase 165,000 MT to replenish its stock. By the end of August 2009, NFRA had purchased a total of 17,435 MT of maize, bringing its stock to a total of 93,231 MT of maize and sorghum. The NFRA is vital for managing domestic stocks, mitigating prices, and supporting the food-insecure households as identified by the RVA.

## Seasonal progress

The performance of the *vuli* rains in Tanzania is critical to ease the prolonged severe drought that has continued since 2007. September is an important period for land preparation in bimodal areas and as the season progresses, planting activities will commence providing more agricultural labor opportunities and thus improve income for casual labor dependent poor households in bimodal areas. The Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA) has forecast the onset of *vuli* rains to begin

between the second and fourth week of September in bimodal areas, which will facilitate agricultural activities and provide more agricultural labor opportunities. The unimodal parts of the country will continue to be dry until November, when *msimu* rains are expected to begin. Land preparation for the *msimu* season is expected to start in October.

The 2009/2010 El Niño event is expected to be generally beneficial to drought-affected marginal agricultural and pastoral communities. Below-normal to normal rainfall, on the other hand, may be experienced in southern Tanzania, especially in some parts of the main cereal growing areas (Figure 2). The detailed country forecast suggests that the below-normal to normal rainfall forecast will affect Ruvuma, one of the main cereal growing areas, as well as Lindi and Mtwara, which are marginal agropastoral areas. According to TMA, the El Niño event is also likely to affect rainfall intensity, and could lead to excessive soil moisture, flooding, and destruction of transport infrastructure, which will affect food movements within the country.

Pasture conditions and water availability for livestock are declining in both bimodal and unimodal areas given the ongoing dry conditions, negatively affecting animal body conditions and hence the terms of trade between animals and grains. According to the Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS), some parts of Monduli, Same, Mwanga, and Mbulu in the north are currently in a scarce to severe drought condition. As rains start, pasture for livestock will rejuvenate and water availability will improve, thus improving the animal body conditions. Furthermore, as animals will remain close to the homes, they will provide income and milk for household consumption as an important source of protein and nutrition.

Field reports from Lindi and Mtwara indicate that many areas received inadequate rains during the last *msimu* rainy season, thus many farmers are expecting below normal cashew nut production. Most households in Lindi and Mtwara depend on cashew nuts for their main source of income. If cashew nut prices will be lower, households' incomes will be low, affecting their ability to access food and other social needs. It is therefore advised to continue monitoring crop prices in these areas.

## Markets and trade

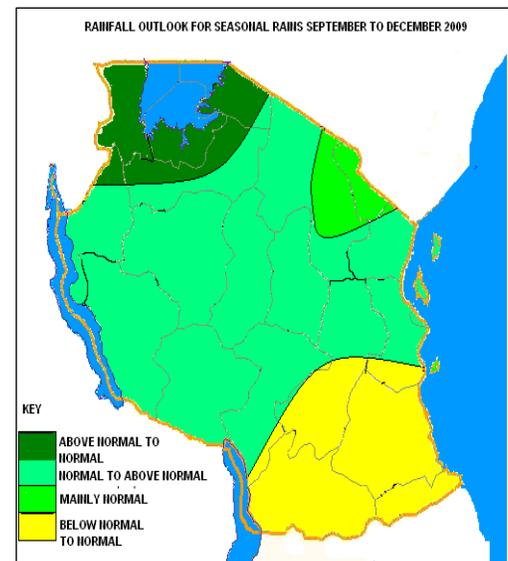
All markets continued to receive food supplies from surplus-producing areas. This has been facilitated by road improvements in many parts of the country and the prevailing dry conditions, which enables the use of feeder roads. The prices of major staple foods (maize, rice, and beans) remain higher than five-year average and this time last year in most markets, with the exception of Kigoma and Songea, which registered lower bean prices than this time last year, though they remain above the five-year average.

Maize prices have declined in some deficit-production areas like Arusha, whereas in other markets (Lindi, Babati, Dodoma, Singida, and Tabora), maize prices have increased due to declining farmer stocks. In surplus maize-production areas (Mbeya, Songea, Kigoma), prices have increased because of ongoing buying activities by private traders in advance of the hunger season, and by NFRA to replenish its stock, thus putting pressure on prices. Due to the porous nature Tanzania's border and spatial price differentials, there are also significant informal cross border outflows to Zambia, which increases prices in Mbeya. Declining maize prices in deficit areas improve food access for market-dependent households, since maize is a major source of carbohydrates consumed by most households.

In Sumbawanga, maize prices have declined because of high supplies following good harvests last season and the remoteness of the region, which makes it inaccessible by many traders and high transportation costs to the markets. This situation has led to oversupply of maize and hence pushes down prices, affecting farmers' income and their general purchasing power of other non-food items.

Rice and bean prices generally exhibited minor changes in most markets across the country, but remained higher than the five-year average and during the same time last year.

**Figure 2:** Rainfall forecast for September to December 2009



Source: Tanzania Meteorological Agency