# Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes expected in south, center, and north

Key Messages

- **Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to persist from October 2024 to January 2025 in areas affected by El Niño-induced drought during the 2023/2024 agricultural season and areas impacted by conflict in the north.** This is due to a combination of factors, including the onset of the lean season in October, below-average harvests in 2024, limited income-earning opportunities due to increased competition, and above-average staple food prices. These conditions will make it difficult for poor and very poor households with below-average purchasing power to access food. In Cabo Delgado, certain areas that receive regular humanitarian food assistance are likely to experience Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!).

- **Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to persist through March 2025, particularly in the central region, due to the negative effects of the peak of the lean season.** Staple food prices usually reach their peak during this time, and this year they are above average, making it even more difficult for local households, particularly the poor and very poor, to access food from markets. **However, with the commencement of harvests in April and May 2025, there is potential for improvement in food access, leading to a reduction in acute food insecurity levels to Minimal (IPC Phase 1) or Stressed (IPC Phase 2).** In conflict-affected areas of Cabo Delgado, the situation is expected to remain volatile, as sporadic attacks are likely to persist.

- **The areas of highest concern include the semi-arid areas in the country's central region, which are remote areas with limited access to markets, and the conflict-affected areas in the southeast of Cabo Delgado.** The coastal and low-lying areas are at risk of flooding, particularly from tropical storms

- **In September 2024, Food Security Cluster (FSC) partners provided food assistance to about 276,200 people in Cabo Delgado and Nampula, meeting 40 percent of their monthly caloric needs. This support reached 30 percent of the targeted population in the 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan, with nearly 60 percent delivered as in-kind aid and around 40 percent as cash or vouchers.** In the Macomia district, humanitarian food assistance was resumed in October after being suspended since May 2024 due to security concerns. FSC partners plan to assist 268,850 beneficiaries with agricultural inputs in preparation for the 2024/2025 agricultural season, while 4,865 individuals will receive food from Oxfam and Caritas in October and November. As of October, available

Projected food security outcomes, October 2024 - January 2025
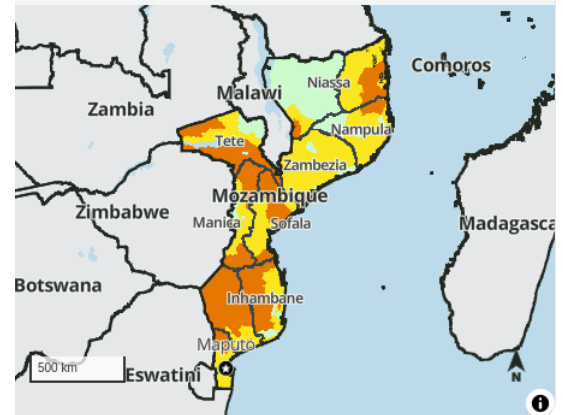
Projected food security outcomes, February - May 2025
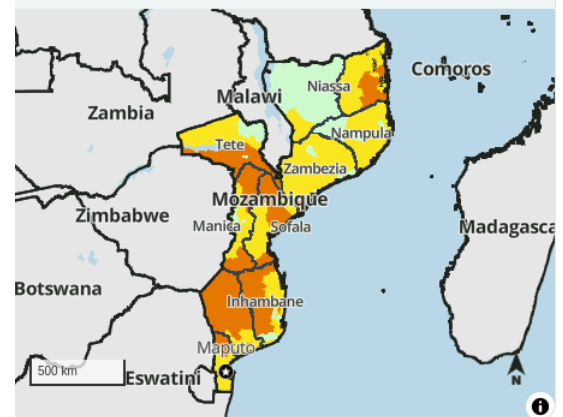
IPC 3.1 Acute Food Insecurity Classification

Presence Countries
- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine

Symbols
- ! Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or planned humanitarian food assistance

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. For full disclosure, see endnotes.

Source: FEWS NET

resources will enable humanitarian food assistance for approximately 350,000 people and provide livelihood support for around 165,000 people during the peak of the upcoming lean season from November 2024 to March 2025. The overall goal is to assist 1.1 million individuals impacted by El Niño.

- *The analysis in this report is based on information available as of October 25, 2024.*

Analysis in brief

About 10 percent of the total population of Mozambique may experience Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes during the peak of the lean season
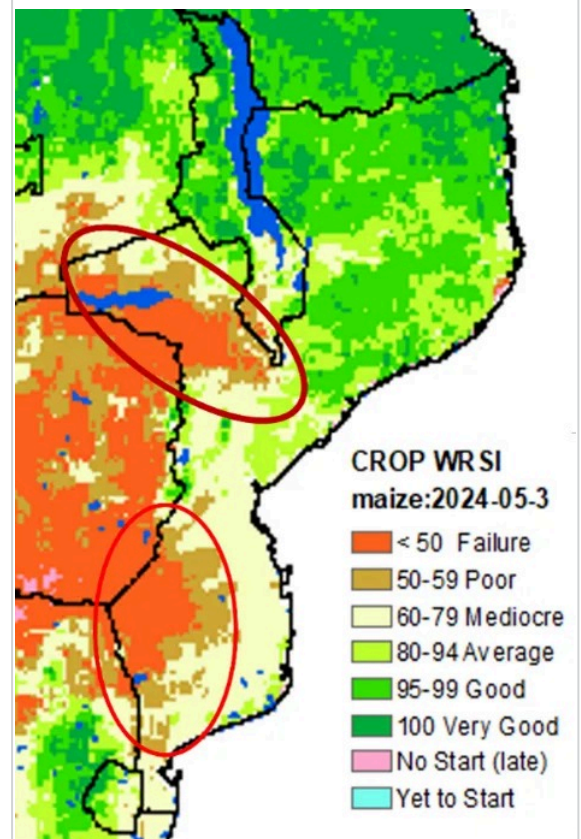
El Niño induced drought, floods (linked to Tropical Storm Filipo) during the 2023/2024 agricultural season, and conflict in the north continue to impact access to food and income for poor and very poor households in Mozambique. As a result, high levels of food insecurity are observed in the central and southern semi-arid zones, as well as the southeastern parts of Cabo Delgado, where Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are prevalent.

In most central and southern semiarid areas, agricultural production, the main source of food for most poor and very poor rural households, was well below average during the 2023/2024 season (Figure 1). Food reserves at the household level have been depleted much earlier than usual, particularly for poor and very poor households, some of which have had almost no harvest. These households are doing their best to earn income to buy food from local markets. However, limited self-employment opportunities, combined with increased competition and higher-than-average food prices, are leading to deficits in household food consumption. As a result, the worst-affected households are resorting to coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, such as reducing the number or size of meals, prioritizing children's consumption over adults, withdrawing children from school, seeking help from family members, and increasing the consumption of wild food. **These households cannot meet their basic food needs without humanitarian assistance, and there's a higher likelihood that more and more households could be facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) until the main harvest in April 2025.**

Figure 1. Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI) as of May 31, 2024

Source: USGS/FEWS NET

The conflict in Cabo Delgado remains a major cause of acute food insecurity and worsens inequalities in the northern region. The armed insurgency **intensified earlier this year, leading to significant humanitarian access challenges and a large number of internally displaced people**. Although conflict has eased somewhat due to joint intervention of government forces, Rwandan defense forces, and local militias, insecurity persists, occasionally causing further displacement and hindering families from rebuilding their lives. Humanitarian organizations face challenges that sometimes interrupt their operations. Additionally, the increasing humanitarian needs in areas affected by El Niño-induced drought pose a significant challenge given the insufficient resources available. The **Mozambique Drought Flash Appeal**, launched by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in coordination with the government of Mozambique, continues to mobilize resources to meet the assistance needs of affected communities.

La Niña conditions are expected to emerge in the September to November period (60 percent chance) and persist through January to March 2025. In Mozambique, the 2024/25 rainy season is expected to bring **normal to above-normal rainfall in the central and southern zones but normal to below-normal rainfall in the northern portion of the northern zone**. This may impact early-planted crops in the northern region, but, overall, an average

agricultural season is anticipated. Above-average temperatures are likely through March 2025, and there is an increased risk of cyclones, strong winds, and floods from January to March 2025. **The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADER) expects an average to above-average agricultural season nationwide** but warns of potential flooding in low-lying areas that may need continued monitoring.

Food security context

Despite its tremendous agricultural potential, Mozambique faces significant food insecurity challenges due to weather hazards and sociopolitical factors. Most of the country is susceptible to extreme weather events, including cyclones, floods, and droughts, which can severely impact food production and availability. Most recently, El Niño-induced drought and the severe impacts of Tropical Storm Filipo caused widespread destruction of crops, infrastructure, and livelihoods in central parts of the country, making it difficult for poor and very poor households to recover. These disasters have also displaced thousands of people, further exacerbating acute food insecurity by disrupting food production and displacing communities. High levels of poverty and chronic food insecurity also render poor and very poor households more vulnerable to acute food insecurity in the face of shocks. For instance, the stunting rate among children under five **remains around 37 percent**, while poor dietary diversity, inadequate healthcare, and frequent disease outbreaks further contribute to the deterioration of their nutritional status.

Agriculture—dominated by rainfed farming systems—is the major economic sector in Mozambique, with over 70 percent of the population relying on it for their livelihoods. Smallholder farmers generally use limited inputs and technologies, resulting in low crop productivity, and are highly susceptible to extreme weather events. Additionally, farmers typically experience high post-harvest losses, averaging **around 30 percent of production,** due to inadequate storage facilities.

Crop production is typically the main source of food and income for rural poor and very poor households. **Mozambique's primary harvest season typically begins around April and concludes around June (Figure 2).** The ongoing second season (largely vegetable cultivation) is mainly practiced in the low-lying areas of the central and southern regions using residual moisture from the main rainy season. Planting of second-season crops begins around April, with the vegetable harvest expected to start 60 days later and other crops being harvested from August through October. Income-generating agricultural activities include land preparation and planting from October to December, as well as weeding in February and March during the main season.. However, this period represents the country's typical peak of the lean season (Figure 2), which coincides with the rainy season, characterized by the depletion of household food stocks and seasonal food price increases. Rates of acute malnutrition also increase seasonally during this time of the year.

The northern province of Cabo Delgado has been a center of conflict since 2017, plagued by an insurgency led by Islamist militant groups, often referred to as Al-Shabaab. At the height of the conflict in 2021 and 2022, over 1 million people were displaced and forced to flee their homes, destroying infrastructure and disrupting the local economies. Agricultural activities were severely impacted, with crop production significantly reduced due to decreased cultivated land. Currently, many farmers are still unable to access their farmlands and markets and lack access to employment, which significantly reduces their capacity to produce sufficient food and raise enough income. This reduction in food availability and supplies is further exacerbated by the destruction of infrastructure, such as roads and markets, which hinders the transportation and distribution of food. As a result, most people in this region are dependent on humanitarian food assistance.

Figure 2. Seasonal calendar for a typical year in central areas of Mozambique

Source: FEWS NET
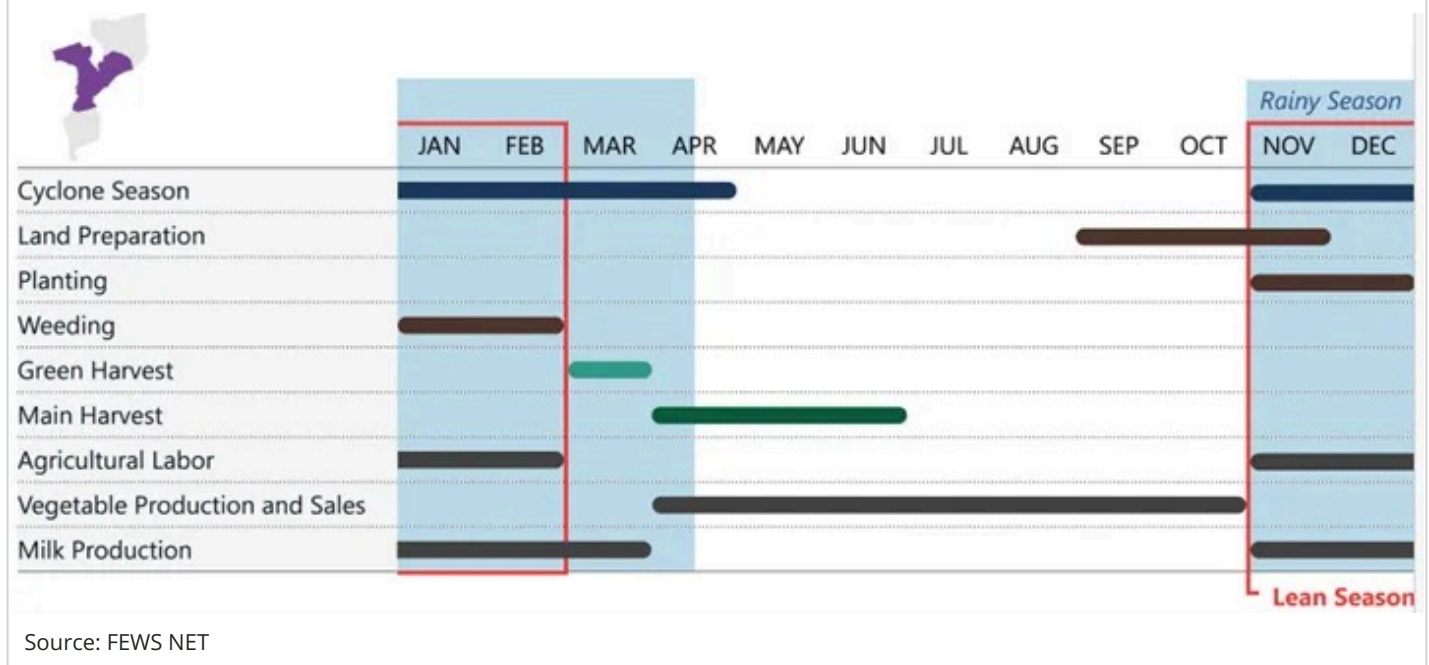
Access the complete set of seasonal calendars for Mozambique **here**.

Learn more

Follow these links for additional information:

- Previous **Mozambique Food Security Outlook: June 2024 to January 2025**
- Latest Mozambique **Key Messages: September 2024**
- Overview of **FEWS NET's scenario development methodology**
- FEWS NET's approach to estimating the **population in need**
- Overview of the **IPC and IPC-compatible analysis**
- FEWS NET's approach to **humanitarian food assistance analysis**

Current food security conditions as of October 2024

*Early warning of acute food insecurity outcomes requires forecasting outcomes months in advance to provide decision makers with sufficient time to budget, plan, and respond to expected humanitarian crises. However, due to the complex and variable factors that influence acute food insecurity, definitive predictions are impossible. **Scenario Development** is the methodology that allows FEWS NET to meet decision makers' needs by developing a "most likely" scenario of the future. The starting point for scenario development is a robust analysis of current food security conditions, which is the focus of this section.*

*Key guiding principles for FEWS NET's scenario development process include applying the Disaster Risk Reduction framework and a livelihoods-based lens to assessing acute food insecurity outcomes. A household's **risk of acute food insecurity** is a function of not only **hazards** (such as a drought) but also the household's **vulnerability** to those hazards (for example, the household's level of dependence on rainfed crop production for **food and income**) and **coping capacity** (which considers both household capacity to cope with a given hazard and the use of negative coping strategies that harm future coping capacity). To evaluate these factors, FEWS NET grounds this analysis in a strong foundational understanding of **local liveli-***

hoods, which are the means by which a household meets their basic needs. FEWS NET's scenario development process also accounts for the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework; the Four Dimensions of Food Security; and UNICEF's Nutrition Conceptual Framework, and is closely aligned with the **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification** (IPC) analytical framework.

Key hazards

Weather:

El Niño-induced drought: The rainy and agricultural season of 2023/24 was significantly affected by a drought induced by the El Niño phenomenon in much of the country (Figure 3). In the 2023/2024 agricultural and rainy season, the central zone of the country was more severely affected by El Niño-induced drought compared to the southern zone. The 2023/2024 El Niño drought was also found to be more severe in the central zone than the 2015/2016 El Niño drought, based on a comparative analysis using the Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI). The WRSI at the end of the 2024 agricultural season was, on average, 12 percent lower in the central zone compared to 2016. This made the central semi-arid zone a major area of concern due to adverse agrometeorological conditions in the 2023/2024 season. On the other hand, the southern zone experienced heavy rainfall in March associated with Tropical Storm Filipo, which brought much-needed moisture that mitigated the effects of the El Niño-induced drought. This resulted in less severe impacts from El Niño in the south zone compared to 2015/2016.

Tropical Storm Filipo: Severe Tropical Storm Filipo struck in mid-March 2024, bringing maximum winds of 90 km/h, gusts exceeding 120 km/h, and heavy rainfall of 150 mm in 24 hours. It primarily impacted Sofala, Inhambane, Gaza, and Maputo provinces. Ten days later, flooding occurred in the southern zone, particularly in Maputo, due to torrential rains. Nearly 200,000 people were negatively affected, and over 30,000 hectares of various crops were impacted, with around 20 percent of the crops destroyed.
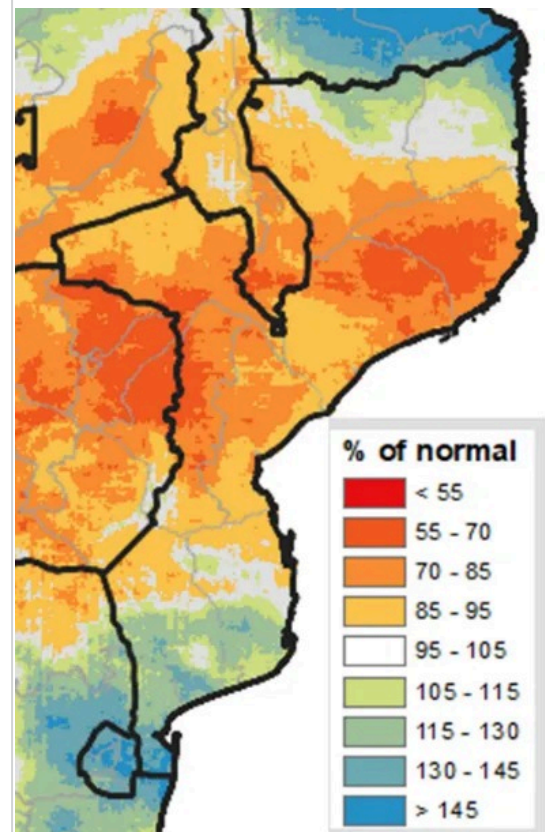
Conflict:

After a series of attacks in the province of Cabo Delgado earlier this year, the presence of government forces and an increasing presence of Rwandan and local forces has helped maintain relative stability in the area in the following months. However, small, scattered groups of insurgents continue to operate in various locations in Cabo Delgado, including Chiúre, Metuge, Quissanga, Ancuabe, Mocímboa da Praia, Macomia, and Mecufi, leading to ongoing tension and fear of further attacks. According to the **IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (IOM/DTM) assessment**, over 610,000 returnees and more than 577,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were identified in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, and Niassa in Northern Mozambique between May and June 2024. Cabo Delgado province is home to 94 percent of the overall IDP population, followed by Nampula and Niassa, mainly due to the continued conflict. **Despite a decrease in the level of IDPs compared to the previous IOM/DTM assessment in January 2024**, new displacements due to sporadic attacks were recorded in Northern Mozambique.

Figure 3. Seasonal rainfall accumulation percent of normal - October 2023-May 2024

Source: USGS/FEWS NET

Lack of seeds:

Shortage of seeds for the 2024/2025 agricultural season: In the 2023/2024 agricultural season, a drought caused by El Niño led to significant crop losses and below-average income for many poor and very poor households. As a result, these households lack the purchasing power to access seeds. Furthermore, due to the poor harvest in 2024, many of these households will not have their own retained seeds available.

Analysis of key food and income sources

Crop production:

The El Niño-induced drought significantly impacted the heavy rain-dependent agricultural production in Mozambique. This resulted in **around 25 to 35 percent reduction in national maize production**, which is the primary cereal grown and consumed in Mozambique. The semi-arid areas in the central zone were particularly affected. The productive areas of Mozambique, which are typically not prone to El Niño effects, were equally affected by the drought. However, in the northern part of the country, including the provinces of Nampula, Niassa, and parts of Cabo Delgado (which were not directly affected by the conflict), agricultural production was good in the 2023/2024 season.

The second agricultural season runs from April until the beginning of the following rainy season, and it is mainly focused on vegetable production. This is mainly done in low-lying areas with sufficient residual moisture or access to water sources for irrigation. In 2024, the vegetable production in the southern zone was close to average, thanks to good availability of residual moisture and near-average river levels. However, in the central zone, residual moisture was below average, resulting in below-average production levels in the second season. Despite varying production levels, horticultural production played a key role in reducing food consumption gaps and providing a source of income in the areas where it was possible.

Livestock production:

During the dry period from May to September, there have been no alarming reports of livestock deaths due to lack of pasture or water, unlike during the 2015/2016 El Niño, especially in the southern zone. This time, the southern zone, which has great potential for cattle breeding, reported few or no cattle deaths or large movements of cattle in search of water and pasture. In the semi-arid areas of the central region, goats, which are the most abundant in those areas, are in good physical condition as they are more tolerant to drought conditions. However, cattle show some physical deterioration due to reduced availability of pasture and water. In the northern region, livestock production continued normally, except in areas affected by conflict, where livestock production was severely affected.

Wild food:

In the southern zone, wild foods are more available compared to the central zone, but they are still below average in both regions. Some poor and very poor households in the south have access to wild foods like *macuacua*, *xicutsi* (a root used to make traditional tea during bad years), *tissundo*, *massala*, and *mapfilo*. In the central zone, where the effects of the drought are more severe, more households have sought wild foods such as *malambe* (baobab fruit), *mahimbe*, *massanica*, and *Nhica*. Though demand is high, the availability of these wild foods is low, making it increasingly difficult to find them, with long walks often required to locate them.

Off-own-farm sources of income:

- **Agricultural labor and wages:** During the dry season from May until just before the start of the rainy season in November, agricultural labor and wages are typically minimal because most activities during this time focus on non-agricultural work. The only exception is the second-season production (vegetable production), which is practiced in suitable areas and usually involves a small number of households. This year, agricultural labor opportunities and wages related to second-season production were close to average in the south zone and below average in the central zone. In the north, agricultural labor and wages were close to average in most of the region, except in areas affected by the conflict in Cabo Delgado, where levels were below average.

- **Sale of charcoal and firewood:** Cutting down trees for charcoal production remains the primary source of income for many communities affected by weather disasters, particularly drought. Since May, this activity has intensified, leading to increased competition and below-average income. Only households near main corridors can sell their charcoal at reasonable prices. For those who live in remote areas, selling at low prices or transporting charcoal to more favorable locations is unprofitable.

- **Artisanal mines:** In many rural areas and beyond, many young people turn to artisanal mining as an alternative

to dealing with the impacts of weather shocks or lack of employment. **Official statistics** indicate that there are thousands of artisanal mines spread throughout the country, with a higher concentration in the central and northern areas. Artisanal mining has been a long-standing practice in Mozambique, with the main valuable minerals being gold and precious and semi-precious stones. In recent years, the types of minerals being extracted have expanded to include building stone, limestone, sand, clay, tantalite, and mineral coal. Despite many mining activities being illegal and highly dangerous, mining provides income for numerous households in rural areas and serves as an alternative to agriculture, which is increasingly affected by weather-related shocks due to climate change.

- **Petty trade:** Petty trade is a common activity in rural communities, except in conflict-affected areas where insecurity makes it difficult. This activity, along with other non-agricultural activities, is attracting more participants, but the income earned is relatively low, especially in bad years like the current one, where purchasing power is reduced. In addition to buying and selling various products, petty trade also includes the production and sale of traditional drinks, which is common in several communities. However, low cereal production has impacted local drink production and caused a drop in income. Some households earn income through crafting, but demand is low during drought years, as many households prioritize food over other non-food needs.

- **Other sources of income:** The cutting and sale of grass/straw, reeds, and stakes for house construction (Figure 4) is currently below average due to low demand caused by below-average income. Many households are prioritizing the search for food, which is reducing the demand for these materials and leading to lower prices. Similarly, the production and sale of clay bricks is also impacted by the reduced purchasing power of potential buyers, especially in urban and peri-urban areas where the bricks are typically in demand.

Market supplies:

The current supply of staple foods such as maize grain is below-average, which has led to higher prices compared to last year and the five-year average. For example, in the Maputo market, prices of maize grain are currently 13 percent higher than last year's prices and 33 percent above the five-year average. However, from June to September, the supply of vegetables in the southern zone remained relatively stable, with prices close to average due to favorable production conditions during the second season. In contrast, the central zone experienced below-average vegetable supply and higher-than-average prices. Despite this, markets are well stocked with other products such as beans, tubers, and processed goods. Price differentials are influencing the movement of products from surplus areas to deficit areas, with both formal and informal traders using the opportunities.

Household purchasing capacity:

In the 2024/25 consumption year, many poor and very poor households in areas affected by shocks continue to experience difficulties in buying enough food due to limited incomes and above-average staple food prices. Maize grain prices in southern and central markets have remained stable, but they are higher than last year's prices and the five-year average. For instance, in Maputo, the price of maize grain is currently 13 percent higher than last year's price and 33 percent higher than the five-year average. In Mutarara, in Tete province, the price of maize grain is 32 percent higher than last year's price and 60 percent higher than the five-year average. This has particularly impacted households in the semi-arid zone in the central region, where drought-affected households with poor harvests and limited incomes face re-

Figure 4. Transporting poles for construction to sell in Sofala town

Source: FEWS NET

stricted purchasing power due to high market prices. In the northern region, prices decreased at harvest time as typical and remain relatively more favorable compared to the central and southern areas. In the Montepuez market in Cabo Delgado, the price of maize grain remained stable from June to August but was 17 percent above last year's level and 10 percent above the five-year average in August. Conflict-displaced households in Cabo Delgado struggle to access and purchase food, with most relying on humanitarian food assistance.

Humanitarian food assistance

*Humanitarian food assistance – defined as emergency food assistance (in-kind, cash, or voucher) – may play a key role in mitigating the severity of acute food insecurity outcomes. FEWS NET analysts always incorporate available information on food assistance, with the caveat that information on food assistance is highly variable across geographies and over time. In line with IPC protocols, FEWS NET uses the best available information to assess where food assistance is "significant" (defined by at least 25 percent of households in a given area receiving at least 25 percent of their caloric requirements through food assistance); see report Annex. In addition, FEWS NET conducts deeper analysis of the likely impacts of food assistance on the severity of outcomes, as detailed in FEWS NET's guidance on **Integrating Humanitarian Food Assistance into Scenario Development**. Other types of assistance (e.g., livelihoods or nutrition assistance; social safety net programs) are incorporated elsewhere in FEWS NET's broader analysis, as applicable.*

In September 2024, partners of the Food Security Cluster (FSC) provided general food assistance equivalent to approximately 40 percent of monthly kilocalorie requirements for around 276,000 people in Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces. This assistance reached over 30 percent of the population targeted in the **2024 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)**. The assistance mainly consisted of in-kind support (around 60 percent) and cash/vouchers (around 40 percent). In the Macomia district, humanitarian food assistance was resumed in October after being suspended since May 2024 due to security issues.

Current acute food insecurity outcomes as of October 2024

*Based on the analysis of food security conditions, FEWS NET then assesses the extent to which households are able to meet their minimum caloric needs. This analysis converges evidence of food security conditions with available direct evidence of household-level food consumption and livelihood change; FEWS NET also considers available area-level evidence of nutritional status and mortality, with a focus on assessing if these reflect the physiological impacts of acute food insecurity rather than other non-food-related factors. Ultimately, FEWS NET uses the globally recognized five-phase **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) scale** to classify current acute food insecurity outcomes. In addition, FEWS NET applies the "!" symbol to designate areas where the mapped IPC Phase would likely be at least one IPC Phase worse without the effects of ongoing humanitarian food assistance.*

Current food security outcomes, October 2024

IPC 3.1 Acute Food Insecurity Classification

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- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
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- 5: Famine

Symbols
! — Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or planned humanitarian food assistance

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Source: FEWS NET

South and central zones:

Since May 2024, access to food and income for poor and very poor households has been affected by the impact of climate shocks experienced during the 2023/2024 season, particularly the drought caused by El Niño. Most poor and very poor households either had no food reserves or had already used up their meager harvest. Since then, acute food insecurity has been worsening as more households are running out of food reserves, including some middle-income households. In such situations, affected households usually resort to selling animals to buy food in local markets. However, selling animals such as chickens, ducks, and other small animals does not provide sufficient income due to the limited number of animals. Moreover, very poor
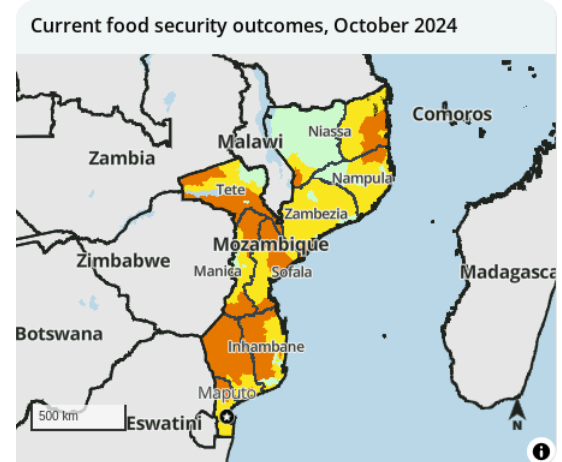
households lack animals to sell and have few options for generating income. At the same time, high prices of staple foods such as maize grain, which are on average 33 percent and 60 percent above the five-year average in the south and center, respectively, are reducing purchasing power and limiting access to food sold in local markets.

Poor and very poor households living in the semi-arid areas of the south and center of the country are facing challenges in generating enough income, primarily due to poor production and limited employment opportunities, particularly in areas far from major cities and town centers. As a result, these households are experiencing food consumption gaps and need humanitarian food assistance. These households are resorting to coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, such as reducing the number or size of meals, prioritizing children's consumption over adults, withdrawing children from school, seeking help from family members, sending children to other families, and increasing the consumption of wild foods. Even after adopting these coping strategies, very poor and poor households still struggle to get adequate food. As a result, some households are forced to take extreme measures, such as moving temporarily to other areas in search of better conditions for survival. This migration may involve searching for small-scale mining sites, many of which are illegal and unsafe. Although it is against the law in most cases, some members of poor and very poor households hunt for food or sale. Others travel long distances to remote areas with water sources for fishing activities.

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) is present in the semi-arid areas of the south and center, where poor and very poor households with food consumption deficits need urgent humanitarian food assistance. The provision of humanitarian food assistance would prevent the deterioration of nutritional status and prevent worse food insecurity outcomes, as well as prevent the adoption of negative coping mechanisms that affect livelihoods and compromise future living conditions.

Conflict areas in Cabo Delgado and Nampula:

The situation in Cabo Delgado is relatively stable due to the offensive by government forces with the assistance of the Rwandan contingent and local forces. However, non-state armed groups (NSAGs) continue to move, and small-scale sporadic attacks, **such as the recent attack in Mocímboa da Praia**, still occur, maintaining tension and fear. This prevents people from fully resuming their normal livelihoods, including the normal functioning of markets and trades in general. As a result, the most vulnerable IDPs and returnees still rely on **humanitarian food assistance**.

The occurrence of sporadic attacks is undermining any efforts aimed at recovering basic livelihoods, creating further dependence on humanitarian food assistance. As a result, new waves of internally displaced people and returnees are constantly emerging, posing significant challenges to humanitarian efforts. Limited income-generating opportunities and purchasing power have intensified competition for limited resources. For most IDPs and returnees, the main source of food remains humanitarian food assistance. Increased insecurity and limited response resources are driving persistent Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, while Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) outcomes are present in areas that are regularly receiving humanitarian food assistance. In relatively safer areas, Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are present, as most poor and very poor households have access to minimum food requirements but have difficulty covering non-food expenses due to the need to share their limited resources with internally displaced family members. However, in non-conflict areas of Cabo Delgado, favorable agroclimatic conditions during the 2023/24 season have led to increased agricultural production, resulting in improved food security for most households.

In Nampula, the districts of Erati and Memba are currently experiencing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, although there is a tendency for improvement as many of the displaced individuals are returning to their areas of origin. This displacement followed the **April incident in Erati district caused by NSAG from Cabo Delgado**.

FEWS NET's analysis is based on events through October 25, 2024, and highlights recent unrest in Mozambique after allegations of electoral fraud in the October 9 elections. Since October 21, demonstrations and violent clashes erupted in various parts of the country. The **official announcement of election results on October 24**th, declaring the ruling party's candidate as the winner, sparked calls for an additional week-long general strike starting October 31. **Reports** indicate that the unrest led to the closure of essential services, including shops, small businesses, markets, and public transportation, disrupting access to food and income, particularly for low-income families in and around

major urban centers. Based on the degree of current and anticipated impacts, FEWS NET does not expect a significant change to the severity of mapped acute food insecurity outcomes. FEWS NET will continue to monitor the situation and provide timely updates on projected outcomes if necessary.

Current nutrition outcomes at the national level:

Although many low-income households in areas severely affected by shocks are likely experiencing a caloric deficit due to insufficient food consumption, the current levels of acute malnutrition range between Acceptable (Phase 1) with GAM less than 5 percent and Alert (Phase 2) with GAM between 5 and 9.9 percent for most households. However, in some districts with typically high chronic malnutrition, such as Morrumbala and Eráti, acute malnutrition is rated as Serious (IPC Phase 3) with GAM between 10 and 14.9 percent.

Key assumptions about atypical food security conditions through May 2025

*The next step in FEWS NET's **scenario development** process is to develop evidence-based assumptions about factors that affect food security conditions. This includes **hazards** and **anomalies** in food security conditions that will affect the evolution of household food and income during the projection period, as well as factors that may affect nutritional status. FEWS NET also develops assumptions on factors that are expected to behave normally. Together, these assumptions underpin the **"most likely" scenario**. The sequence of making assumptions is important; primary assumptions (e.g., expectations pertaining to weather) must be developed before secondary assumptions (e.g., expectations pertaining to crop or livestock production). Key assumptions that underpin this analysis, and the key sources of evidence used to develop the assumptions, are listed below.*

National assumptions

- **La Niña is expected to emerge in September to November (60 percent chance) and is expected to persist through January to March 2025**. The start of the 2024/25 rainy season from October to December 2024 will most likely start on time with average rainfall across Mozambique. Cumulative rainfall is expected to be normal to above normal in the central and southern zones but **normal to below normal in the northern zone** during the 2024/25 rainy season.

- Soil moisture levels are expected to gradually improve from October to December 2024. However, **the below-average soil moisture may affect early planted crops in October and Novembe**r, especially in the northern region where normal to below-normal rainfall is forecasted.

- Dam levels and water supply in the southern and central zones are projected to be near average due to the expected recharge from normal to above-normal rainfall during the 2024/25 rainy season. **However, in the north, the forecast of normal to below-normal rainfall could lead to below-average water levels.**

- Above-average temperatures are most likely across Mozambique through March 2025. Extremely high temperatures can cause heat stress, which disrupts the normal growth of plants. Additionally, excessive heat during the flowering period can reduce fruit and seed production, resulting in smaller harvests. Finally, higher temperatures create favorable conditions for the proliferation of pests and diseases that can harm plants.

- **La Niña conditions may increase the likelihood of cyclones, strong winds, and floods affecting Mozambique**, especially from January to March 2025. From October to December 2024, there is a moderate risk of floods expected in the Maputo, Umbeluzi, Incomati, Inhanombe, Mutamba, Save, Savane, and Licungo basins. From January to March 2025, there is a moderate to high risk of floods expected in the Maputo, Umbeluzi, Incomati, Save, Buzi, Pungue, Zambeze, and Licungo hydrographic basins. Additionally, there is a high risk of floods expected in urban areas in the municipalities of Boane, Maputo, Matola, Marracuene, Xai-Xai, Beira, and Quelimane.

- **MADER anticipates an average to above average agricultural season nationwide**, as the upcoming 2024/25 rainy season is expected to provide favorable water levels for crops. MADER emphasizes the importance of continuous monitoring and alerts for potential flooding in low-lying areas.

- Availability of inputs at the household level for the 2024/25 season is below average, particularly for very poor and poor households. Due to multiple unsuccessful planting attempts in the 2023/24 season, poor and very poor households have consumed most of their seeds. With below-average purchasing power, these households are likely to face challenges in obtaining seeds for the upcoming 2024/25 main season. If there are no seed distribution schemes, very poor households will struggle to access seeds due to limited seed availability at the household level, aggravated by below-average purchasing power, leading to a decrease in the total planted area. Additionally, the retained seeds, for those able to save, are typically of poor quality and less resistant to pests and diseases.

- Most farming households will have below-average food stocks until the next main harvest in April 2025. A gradual increase in food availability from the main harvest of the 2024/25 season is expected from April 2025 onwards. As previously reported by FEWS NET, the maize harvest for the 2023/24 agricultural season was **below the five-year average**, mainly due to the effects of the drought induced by El Niño.

- From October 2024 to March 2025, the informal cross-border trade of maize between Malawi and Mozambique is expected to remain below average due to the below-average production of this cereal on both sides of the border during the 2023/24 season. There is an increasing demand for processed products in Mozambique by Zimbabwean traders. Meanwhile, Mozambique will continue **importing maize from South Africa** and global markets.

- Maize grain is expected to continue flowing from high-production areas to the drought-affected areas in the southern and central regions due to the attractive prices and the necessity of addressing shortages in the local markets. However, the overall availability of maize grain will remain below average nationwide until April 2025, when the next main harvest is expected.

- As happens every year, crop fields could be threatened by pest infestations. The extent of the infestation will depend largely on the current capacity for pest control. The main pests of concern for the 2024/25 farming season are fall armyworm (FAW), rodents, grasshoppers, stalk borers, and leaf miners. In recent years, FAW has been a major threat to maize and other crops in the area. It is estimated that **production losses due to pest and disease attacks can reach up to 40 percent** if control measures are not implemented in a timely manner.

- Between October and December 2024, the start of the 2024/25 rainy season will provide near-average agricultural labor opportunities to poor and very poor households, including land preparation, planting, and weeding. Weeding may continue until March 2025, when the green harvest begins in most of the country. Starting in April 2025, the primary focus of agricultural labor will shift to harvesting.

- Agricultural labor wages are expected to stay below average until just before the main harvest due to the negative effects of the El Niño-induced drought in 2024, which has made it difficult for middle and better-off households to earn adequate income. However, as the harvest begins in April, wages for agricultural work are expected to start improving and are likely to reach the average level, especially wages based on in-kind payments.

- According to the FEWS NET integrated price projection (Figure 5), maize grain prices are projected to remain above the five-year average and last year's levels throughout the scenario period. Maize grain prices will remain abnormally high due to below-average maize grain availability in the 2024/25 marketing year. Over the past five years, recurring shocks, including the 2023/2024 El Niño-induced drought, have kept prices high. The current price of maize grain at the Maputo market is 34.00 MZN per kilogram, approximately 40 percent higher than the five-year average and 20 percent higher than last year's level. These higher prices, combined with low purchasing power, will likely affect access to food, particularly for poor and very poor households.

- Livestock prices are expected to stay slightly below average for most of the scenario period. This is because many owners are tempted to sell their animals for income due to a poor harvest from the 2023/24 agricultural season. It's important to note that most very poor households own chickens, some also own goats (usually two to five), and even fewer own pigs.

- Aiming to support households during the 2024/2025 agriculture season in Cabo Delgado, FSC partners (ACF,

CARE International, FAO, Solidarités International (SI), UPCCD, UNDP, and WFP) plan to assist around 268,850 beneficiaries with agricultural inputs and livelihood interventions.

- Although consumption of nutritious food by many low-income households in these areas has been gradually decreasing, acute malnutrition levels have remained between Acceptable (Phase 1) with (GAM < 5 percent) and Alert (Phase 2) with (GAM 5–9.9 percent) from June to September 2024. However, between October 2024 and January 2025, low food supply and excessive consumption of low-calorie wild foods are expected to further worsen the level of acute malnutrition compared to the previous period.

Subnational assumptions for El Niño-induced drought-affected areas (semi-arid areas of south and center)

- Between October 2024 and March 2025, households in the **southern and central regions affected by the El Niño drought are expected to heavily rely on self-employment to earn money for food**. Self-employment activities will mainly include producing and selling charcoal, beverages, and forest products. However, due to high competition, significant profits are not expected. Over the years, many young people have been moving to various existing mining sites to take part in artisanal mining, and this trend is expected to continue. However, farming households will likely balance generating income to purchase food in local markets with agricultural activities, taking into consideration the need to maximize the expected favorable agroclimatic conditions.

Figure 5. Maputo maize grain prices and projections (MZN/kg)

Source: FEWS NET
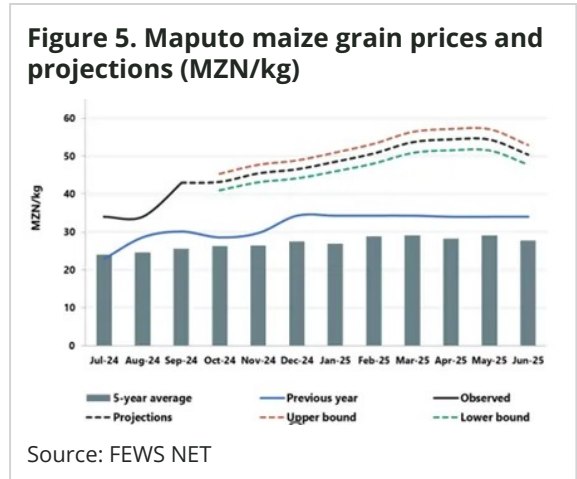
Subnational assumptions for conflict-affected areas/Cabo Delgado

- **There may be sporadic attacks by NSAGs during the scenario period, primarily centered in Cabo Delgado. Small insurgent groups are expected to carry out intermittent attacks on villages in central, coastal, and northern Cabo Delgado**. The armed forces from Mozambique and Rwanda, with the help of local forces, are expected to continue their joint anti-insurgency operations. In certain areas, the presence of IDPs and returnees may pose short- and medium-term challenges related to labor, agricultural resources, and food insecurity. Temporary disruptions in humanitarian food assistance processes may occur due to security concerns.

Humanitarian food assistance

Subnational assumption for El Niño-induced drought areas

- As of October 2024, the available resources ensure humanitarian food assistance during the lean season from November 2024 to March 2025 for around 350,000 people affected by the El Niño-induced drought. Additionally, around 165,000 people (some of whom will also receive food assistance) will receive agricultural inputs. The estimated target for food security and livelihood assistance to the El Niño-affected population is 1.1 million people, so the assistance confirmed will cover about 40 percent of the target. These figures are based on assistance from Mozambique's National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC), as well as confirmed plans of assistance by WFP, FAO, Care, IFRC, World Vision International, Tzu Chi Foundation, and Plan International, which are involved in this humanitarian effort.

Subnational assumption for the conflict affected areas

- From November 2024 to April 2025, WFP plans to assist over 497,000 people in the districts of Macomia, Quissanga, Mocímboa da Praia, Muidumbe, and Nangade. Eighty-six percent of the assistance will be provided in kind, while the remaining 14 percent will be delivered through cash-based transfers (CBT). This assistance will meet approximately 40 percent of households' daily kilocalorie needs.

- In October and November, Oxfam and Caritas will assist over 4,800 people with general food distribution in Montepuez and Mecúfi. Specifically, 2,880 people in Montepuez will receive assistance through vouchers, while 1,985 people in Mecúfi will receive in-kind support. The food rations provided will be equivalent to 78 percent of the recommended daily intake of 2,100 Kcal.

Table 1		
Key sources of evidence FEWS NET analysts incorporated into the development of the above assumptions		
Key sources of evidence:		
Weather and flood forecasts produced by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, USGS, the Climate Hazards Center at the University of California Santa Barbara, and NASA	Conflict analysis and forecasts produced by ACLED, Control Risks Seerist, Signal Room, ACAPS	FEWS NET rapid field assessment conducted in the semi-arid zones of the south (May 2024) and center (January 2024)
FSC partners' humanitarian food assistance distribution plans	**Southern Africa Regional Supply and Market Outlook Update** – April 2024	**Geospatial data, satellite image products, and derived data products**
Consumer Price Index (CPI) press release of August 2024 by the National Institute of Statistics (INE)	Key informant interviews with local extension officers, humanitarian implementing partners, and community leaders	**The International Organization for Migration Displacement Tracking Matrix (IOM/DTM)**
Census of Artisanal Miners in Mozambique - October 2022	**IPC Analysis of Acute Food and Malnutrition Insecurity April 2024 – March 2025 Published on August 2024**	**Production losses due to pest/disease attack**

Projected acute food insecurity outcomes through May 2025

*Using the key assumptions that underpin the **"most likely" scenario**, FEWS NET is then able to project acute food insecurity outcomes by assessingthe evolution of households' ability to meet their minimum caloric needs throughout the projection period. Similar to the analysis of current acute food insecurity outcomes, FEWS NET converges expectations of the likely trajectory of household-level food consumption and livelihood change with area-level nutritional status and mortality. FEWS NET then classifies acute food insecurity outcomes using the IPC scale. Lastly, FEWS NET applies the "!" symbol to designate any areas where the mapped IPC Phase would likely be at least one IPC Phase worse without the effects of planned – and likely to be funded and delivered – food assistance.*

South and central zones:

From October 2024 to January 2025- The 2024/2025 rainy and agricultural season is set to begin, with forecasts indicating a normal start. However, the impacts of the El Niño-induced drought during the 2023/2024 season are expected to persist until the main harvest in April 2025. Very poor households will continue to face deficits in food consumption, and this situation is likely to deteriorate over time as the lean season peaks in December and January. Very poor households will primarily depend on self-employment to earn money to buy food, including casual work such as producing and selling charcoal, an activity practiced by an increasing number of households to the detriment of the environment. Very poor households carry out forest-based work such as cutting and selling stakes, reeds, and straw, which often involves long journeys. With the increase in demand for water, some people are dedicated to fetching water in exchange for food or money. Households with more skilled members practice some activities requiring skills, such as construction, manufacturing and selling clay bricks, making traditional drinks, and producing craft utensils. However, due to competition, lack of market access, and low demand from potential buyers, this option is unlikely to meet households' food and income demands. **The availability of food in local markets is expected to decrease,**

while household demand is likely to increase. This will result in higher staple food prices, which may peak in January. Household purchasing power is anticipated to be well below average due to low incomes, leading to limited access to food.

The number of food-insecure households, particularly in remote semi-arid areas with limited access to wild foods and employment opportunities, is anticipated to grow. These households will eventually be forced to adopt severe coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes. These strategies may include sending a family member to eat elsewhere, using up seed reserves, taking children out of school, skipping or reducing meals, prioritizing children's food consumption, choosing less-preferred and cheaper foods, borrowing food from neighbors, relying on friends or relatives to obtain food, and being forced to rely more on wild foods, which are typically consumed as a last resort. The number of Stressed (IPC Phase 2) households is also expected to increase. These households can meet their minimum caloric needs but struggle to earn enough income to sustain their basic livelihoods. As a result, they prioritize spending on food over health, education, and other non-food items.

The start of the 2024/2025 rainfall and agricultural season will allow households to start clearing and preparing the land. In November, they will start planting where there is likely to be enough rainfall. Self-employment will gradually shift to agricultural activities, **but the extent of sowing will depend on the availability of seeds.** There will be more opportunities for agricultural labor, but it is uncertain whether most poor households will be able to receive timely payments, as better-off households have limited capacity to make such payments before the harvest in April 2025. Overall, as rainfall gradually improves, the availability of wild foods is likely to increase. The forecasted favorable rainfall will also provide water for people and animals and increase pasture availability, gradually improving livestock body conditions.

February to May 2025: During this period, the area is expected to transition from the peak of the lean season to the main harvest of the 2024/2025 season. **In the first two months, from February to March, access to food is expected to deteriorate due to the lingering effects of the El Niño-induced drought combined with the effects of the peak of lean season.** Very poor households will continue to struggle to access enough food, mainly relying on self-employment, which may not be profitable due to competition, lack of market access, and low demand. As a result, these households will have low purchasing capacity, leading to difficulties in buying staple foods. The number of food-insecure households, especially in remote semi-arid areas, is expected to increase. The gradual availability of green food in March **will be crucial to stabilizing or improving food consumption levels and avoiding any deterioration of acute malnutrition. Overall, an increasing number of very poor households may resort to severe coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes.** These strategies may include sending a family member to eat elsewhere, depleting seed reserves, pulling children out of school, skipping or reducing meals, prioritizing children's food consumption, opting for less preferred and cheaper foods, borrowing food from neighbors, relative or friends, and being forced to rely more on wild foods. Market food availability will decrease, and prices will remain high. Very poor households will still face food shortages while increasingly engaging in agricultural work during the upcoming season. **From April to May, the overall food security situation is likely to improve as the green harvest gradually becomes available and the main harvest begins.** Very poor households will be able to consume food from their production and improve food consumption. Staple food prices in local markets are expected to decline seasonally due to the increasing supply from the main harvest, improving access to market foods for those who still depend on markets. Replenished water and pasture levels will facilitate animal reproduction, aiding in restocking sold animals during critical periods. Food security outcomes may improve from Crisis (IPC Phase 3) to Minimum (IPC Phase 1) for most households or Stressed (IPC Phase 2) for those households that have been worst affected and are recovering slowly. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected at the area level from February to May 2025.

Cabo Delgado (conflict-affected areas):

During the entire scenario period, most areas affected by conflict will continue to experience Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes. Due to sporadic attacks by NSAGs, the atmosphere of tension and fear will persist. This will have a negative impact on basic livelihood activities, such as the ability to earn income from agriculture. The movement of

IDPs and returnees will pose significant challenges to humanitarian response efforts, as their numbers fluctuate over time and in different locations. **Both IDPs and returnees will experience food shortages and will require urgent humanitarian assistance for shelter and food**.

In some districts, the presence of humanitarian agencies may be limited due to insecurity and difficult access, making it challenging to reach those in need. This situation could worsen due to the likely destruction of access roads caused by seasonal rains starting next November.

Additionally, there is an insufficient resources for response actions, which is worsened by the increasing demand for humanitarian assistance in areas affected by the El Niño-induced drought in the southern and central regions of the country. Due to these challenges, the districts of Ancuabe, Chiúre, Ibo, Macomia, Mecúfi, and Meluco are likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Meanwhile, districts such as Mocímboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Nangade, and Quissanga, which are expected to receive regular food assistance, may experience Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) acute food insecurity. In Nampula, the districts of Eráti and Memba may improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) due to the relief caused by the progressive return of internally displaced people who were hosted in those districts.

Coastal areas (including cyclone-prone areas):

Between November 2024 and April 2025, there is an increased probability of storms or tropical cyclones occurring in certain areas along the Mozambican coast. These weather events are expected to bring cyclonic winds, heavy rainfall, and floods. As a result, infrastructure and agricultural fields with crops in various stages of growth could be destroyed: strong winds could damage crops, particularly in high-elevation areas, while crops in low-lying areas may be flooded. Poorly constructed houses may also be damaged, increasing IDPs and those in need of shelter in accommodation centers for at least three months. In areas affected by cyclonic systems, the poorest households may face food shortages. This could lead to a Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes, requiring humanitarian food and other assistance for the worst-affected households until they can recover, which may take a minimum three months.

Projected nutrition outcomes at the national level: From October 2024 to March 2025, it is expected that acute malnutrition will deteriorate due to increasing caloric deficits caused by insufficient food consumption by many low-income households in these areas. Despite this, the classification levels are projected to remain between Acceptable (Phase 1) with GAM less than 5 percent and Alert (Phase 2) with GAM between 5 and 9.9 percent for most households. However, in some districts with typically high chronic malnutrition, such as Morrumbala, Eráti, Memba, and Nicoadala, acute malnutrition may persist or worsen to Serious (IPC Phase 3) with GAM between 10 and 14.9 percent. In April and May 2025, as access to food gradually improves for most poor and very poor households, levels of acute malnutrition are likely to range from Acceptable (Phase 1) with a GAM of less than 5 percent to Alert (Phase 2) with a GAM between 5 and 9.9 percent for most areas.

Events that may change projected acute food insecurity outcomes

*While FEWS NET's projections are considered the "most likely" scenario, there is always a **degree of uncertainty** in the assumptions that underpin the scenario. This means food security conditions and their impacts on acute food security may evolve differently than projected. FEWS NET issues monthly updates to its projections, but decision makers need advance information about this uncertainty and an explanation of why things may turn out differently than projected. As such, the final step in FEWS NET's scenario development process is to briefly identify key events that would result in a **credible alternative scenario** and significantly change the projected outcomes. FEWS NET only considers scenarios that have a reasonable chance of occurrence.*

National:

Late and erratic start of rainfall

Likely impact on acute food insecurity outcomes: The late and erratic start of the 2024/25 agricultural season might delay the availability of agricultural labor. Despite below-average wage rates, both cash and in-kind, a significant reduction in income could worsen the food consumption levels of poor and very poor households who are already market-reliant and struggling to meet their food needs.

Southern and central semiarid areas:

Traders do not respond as anticipated, and no additional stocks are imported from international markets and supplied to deficit-producing areas.
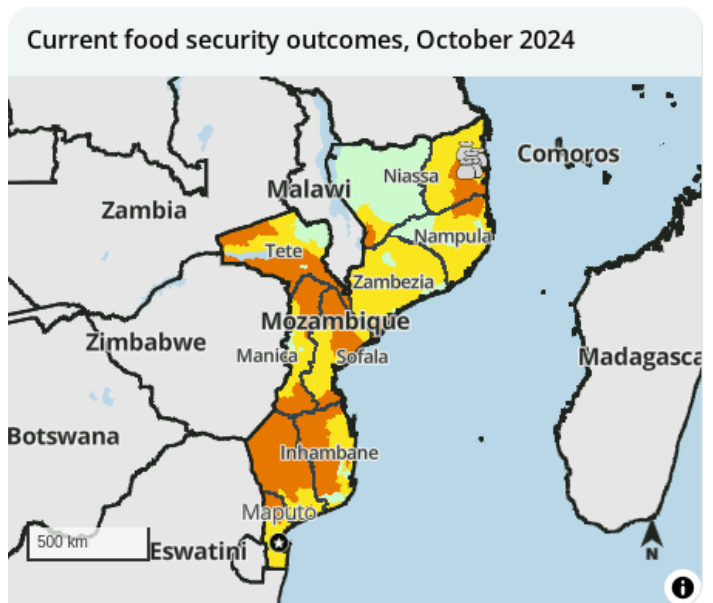
Likely impact on acute food insecurity outcomes: Local markets will be more undersupplied than expected, thus raising food prices more than expected. Food consumption gaps, especially for poor and very poor households, would increase.

Inadequate response to humanitarian assistance needs

Likely impact on acute food insecurity outcomes: Insufficient humanitarian assistance would result in more poor and very poor households facing larger food consumption gaps and a potential increase in acute malnutrition.

Annex: Most likely acute food insecurity outcomes and areas receiving significant levels of humanitarian food assistance

Each of these maps adheres to IPC v3.1 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.

Current food security outcomes, October 2024

IPC 3.1 Acute Food Insecurity Classification

Presence Countries
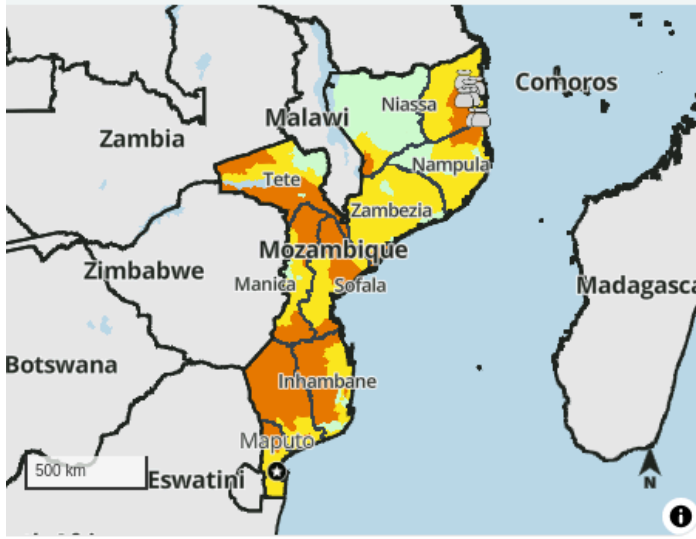- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine

Symbols
- 🛍 >=25% of households met 25-50% of their kcal needs through HFA
- 🛍 >=25% of households met >50% of their kcal needs through HFA
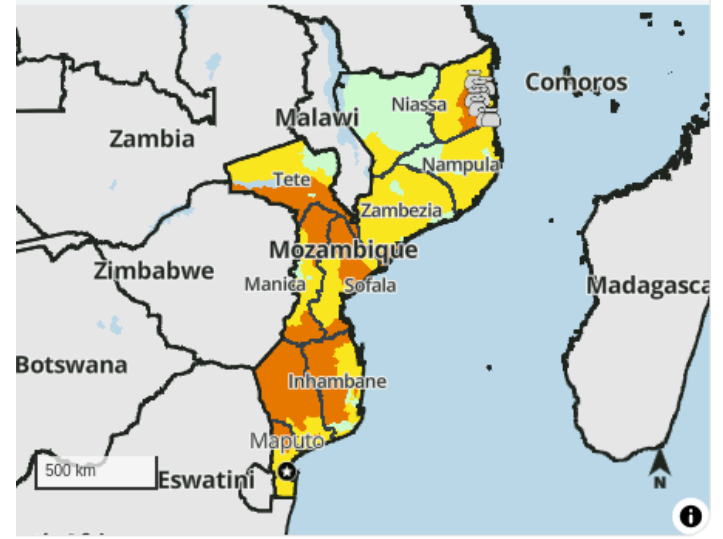
FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners. For full disclosure, see endnotes.

Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, October 2024 - January 2025

IPC 3.1 Acute Food Insecurity Classification

Presence Countries

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine

Symbols

- >=25% of households met 25-50% of their kcal needs through HFA
- >=25% of households met >50% of their kcal needs through HFA

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. For full disclosure, see endnotes.

Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February - May 2025

IPC 3.1 Acute Food Insecurity Classification

Presence Countries

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3: Crisis
- 4: Emergency
- 5: Famine

Symbols

- >=25% of households met 25-50% of their kcal needs through HFA
- >=25% of households met >50% of their kcal needs through HFA

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. For full disclosure, see endnotes.

Source: FEWS NET

Recommended citation: FEWS NET. Mozambique Food Security Outlook October 2024 - May 2025: Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes expected in south, center, and north, 2024.

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* FEWS NET's classifications are IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners. As of IPC 3.0, the IPC no longer assesses the impact of food assistance on classification and thus no longer maps the (!). However, FEWS NET continues to produce food security maps inclusive of the (!) as well as maps compatible with IPC 3.0/3.1, which include the mapping of food security assistance bags. FEWS NET and the IPC use different methods to estimate the total Population in Need of humanitarian food assistance and assess the risk of Famine. Learn more at **www.fews.net/about**.

Food Security Outlook

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**.