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Food security and agricultural livelihoods in the context of COVID-19

Monitoring report
May 2021
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## Abbreviations

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus disease 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEWS NET</td>
<td>Famine Early Warning Systems Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIES</td>
<td>Food Insecurity Experience Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPMA</td>
<td>Food Price Monitoring and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIEWS</td>
<td>Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHS</td>
<td>Household Hunger Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC</td>
<td>Integrated Food Security Phase Classification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDVI</td>
<td>Normalized Difference Vegetation Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFI</td>
<td>Recent food insecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLA</td>
<td>Rural Livelihoods Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZimVAC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZWL</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Real Time Gross Settlement dollar</td>
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Key highlights

Crop production

> The harvest from the 2019/20 main cropping season, which is dominated by maize production, was completed in June, right before the survey was conducted for this assessment during July–August 2020. The season was characterized by a late onset and erratic distribution of rain, leading to an estimated below-average summer crop production nationwide for the 2019/20 season.

> The results of this survey indicate a lower production than last year, consistently with findings from the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC). The difference with the national output can be explained by the contribution of commercial farms in the main producing areas.

> The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) restrictions did not affect the 2019/20 summer planting, which had already taken place before the outbreak but still affected the harvesting of more labour-intensive perennial crops (e.g. fruits, coffee and tea).

> Most crop-producing households surveyed usually cultivate vegetables or beans during the winter season (July–October), but 12 percent are not currently cultivating, although they usually do. One-third is also cultivating smaller areas than usual, and two-thirds reported difficulties in accessing seeds for the winter season.

> Surveyed households in Mashonaland East and Masvingo are found in higher proportion to have farmed smaller areas than usual and faced more difficulties than expected in accessing seeds and other farm inputs. The main difficulties in accessing seeds are often economic in nature (i.e. increased prices and insufficient income), but their availability was also reported as an issue by one-half of households.
Livestock production

More than half of the surveyed households (51 percent) are involved in livestock farming, and 10 percent of them draw their main income from the sale of livestock or livestock products. However, livestock traditionally serves as a safety net in case of hardships. Small ruminants and poultry are the predominant type of main animals owned, while cattle ownership is higher in the southern and dryer Matabeleland provinces.

Three out of four surveyed households reported owning fewer animals than the previous year, mainly due to distress sales in need for cash and given an inability to feed the animals. Surveyed households in Matabeleland reported higher distress sales and higher mortality rates than in other provinces.

Nearly nine out of ten surveyed households reported unusual difficulties in livestock rearing during the three months prior the survey, and nearly half of them reported severe difficulties.

The lack of water and pasture was prominent in Matabeleland, where rainfall was below the national average in the 2018/19 farming season. Difficulties in accessing veterinary inputs and feed were the main difficulties reported in other provinces.

Theileriosis, or January disease, was also reported by the key informants who were interviewed as a major driver to livestock mortality and animal health-related issues. This situation has been aggravated by a lack of dipping chemicals needed to reduce its spread.
Marketing of agricultural products

> All surveyed households who obtain their main income from the sales of crop or livestock products were asked questions about the marketing of their production. Over three out of four of them reported a decrease in their crop sales in the 2019/20 season compared to the 2018/19 season, especially in Mashonaland East.

> Four out of five households reported unusual marketing difficulties, with crop sellers reporting a more severe decrease in sales and higher difficulties experienced.

> The main issues reported were the constraints due to market restrictions and closures, as reported by over half of all surveyed households and confirmed by key informants from the local agriculture extension offices, followed by the higher transportation costs, and lower-than-usual prices and demand.

> Crop producers mainly suffered from a constrained access to markets to sell their perishable vegetable production, while livestock producers suffered more from lower demand levels as consumers also faced economic constraints.

> Over half of surveyed households reported part of their production having gone to waste. This was especially the case among crop producers and, among them, those selling fruits and vegetables (i.e. perishable products) were especially affected.

> Two-thirds of surveyed households reported producer prices being lower than usual, especially among those selling vegetables. On the other hand, four out of five key informants reported limited food availability in the markets compared to previous years, especially in Matabeleland.

> Food prices have soared since the second half of 2019 due to a combination of weak national currency and below-average domestic food supply.

> Against this backdrop, the annual food inflation rate was 865 percent in August 2020. The price of a maize meal bag, a key staple food, increased by 1 300 percent between June 2019 and June 2020; the highest price increases were recorded Matabeleland South and Masvingo.
Livelihoods and food security

> More than four-fifths of surveyed households reported a decrease in income, with nearly half of them reporting a drastic decrease (over 50 percent) over the past three months compared to the same period last year.

> This decrease was most widely reported in Mashonaland East, where the sale of vegetables is a major income source during the period during which the survey was conducted; thus, the decrease in income is likely related to the marketing difficulties and high levels of food waste.

> The surveyed households drawing their main source of income from agricultural activities reported higher levels of income reductions than those relying on non-agricultural income sources. Female-headed households reported a slightly more severe decrease in income than male-headed households.

> The main shocks reported by more than half of surveyed households were price increases and restriction measures, followed by other economic shocks.

> Food insecurity has increased over the past two years. At the time of the survey (July–August), and although the main harvest had been completed recently in June, recent food insecurity levels were high, with over two-thirds of households experiencing moderate or severe levels of food insecurity in the 30 days prior to the survey, as measured by the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), and with over half of the surveyed households suffering from moderate to severe levels of hunger, as measured by the Household Hunger Scale (HHS).

> Higher food insecurity levels were observed in Matabeleland and Masvingo, in line with food consumption results from the ZimVAC Rural Livelihoods Assessment in the same period.

> Nearly four-fifths of surveyed households reported having consumed fewer cereals than last year at the same time, in addition to half of households reporting a reduction in meat, sugar and oil, confirming food access difficulties, not only leading to a reduction in the consumption of more expensive foods (e.g. meat and sugar), but also staple foods (e.g. cereals and oil).
Needs and assistance

> Among all surveyed households, the most urgent assistance requested was food, followed by farm inputs and cash transfers. The request for food assistance was comparatively higher in Mashonaland East.

> Crop producers mainly asked for farm inputs and food, while livestock keepers mainly asked for cash, food and animal health support (e.g. veterinary services and inputs).

> Two-thirds of agriculture extension officers interviewed reported that their work in support of farmers and the assistance programmes that were taking place before the pandemic had been disrupted. They are trying to overcome these challenges by supporting farmers through the creation of online groups, although more isolated farmers do not have access to these platforms.

Prospects

> COVID-19 and the related crises that have resulted have aggravated a pre-existing crisis driven by the deterioration of the economy over the past two years.

> The below-average harvest from the summer crops will lead to an early start of the lean season, probably lasting longer than usual, and resulting in increased food insecurity levels over the next six months, especially as coping capacities have already been eroded after the poor harvest in 2019 and the ongoing economic crisis.

> Planting for the next summer season in November will likely be affected by disruptions in the seed systems and economic access to them due to higher-than-usual prices and reduced incomes, and risks of floods associated with La Niña weather pattern over the period from December to January need to be monitored, as well as the developing COVID-19 epidemiological situation, which is still unstable and could lead to new restrictions.
Methodology

With financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is implementing an agricultural livelihoods and food security monitoring system, involving data collection and analysis in the context of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and other shocks.

The immediate objective of this assessment in Zimbabwe is monitoring the risks that may affect the food security and livelihoods of vulnerable communities and food systems stemming from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and providing early warning information to support evidence-based, decision-making processes.

Within the monitoring system, data is collected every three months, mainly through computer-assisted telephone interviews. At the core of the data facility is a household survey at the Admin 1 level (with a 95 percent confidence level and a 10 percent of margin of error). This information is triangulated with information from key informants such as extension officers, food traders and agricultural inputs vendors, collected using closed-ended questions.

The first round of data collection took place between July and August 2020. Two tools were used to this end:

- A household food security and livelihood survey designed to be statistically representative for both the agricultural and overall population at the provincial level, with a total of 1,330 respondents interviewed by phone using random digit dialling between 11 July and 25 August from all rural provinces (excluding Harare and Bulawayo urban provinces).

- A key informants survey targeting district agricultural officers (crop, livestock and fisheries) from AGRITEX, the technical department for agricultural extension services of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement, providing qualitative information and technical expertise. A total of 119 respondents from all eight rural provinces were interviewed by phone between 26 June and 19 August. The key informants interviewed were drawn from a list supplied by the Ministry.

Interviews were conducted in Shona, Ndebele or English.
The household-level survey was conducted through random digit dialling, stratified at the Admin 1 (province) level. The survey was conducted by GeoPoll\(^1\) through computer-assisted telephone interviewing for both tools. For the household survey, quotas of agricultural households were set for each district, with a minimum of 110 agricultural households targeted in each district out of a total of 150 households targeted, in order to be representative of both the overall population and the agricultural population in each area. Ultimately, the total sample was of 1 330 households and the proportion of respondents involved in agriculture was higher.

Information from household interviews is triangulated with information from key informants (i.e. district extension officers from AGRITEX), which was collected using open and closed-ended questions.

The sample size of respondents by province for each of these tools and different categories of household respondents is shown in Table 1.

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\(^1\) GeoPoll is a service provider of remote mobile-based surveying and research throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America.
Table 1. Sample size by district, survey instrument and category of household respondent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total households surveyed</th>
<th>Non-agricultural households</th>
<th>Agricultural households</th>
<th>Crop-producing households</th>
<th>Households responding to crop section (main income)</th>
<th>Livestock-producing households</th>
<th>Households responding to livestock section (main income)</th>
<th>Fisheries households</th>
<th>Households responding to fisheries section (main income)</th>
<th>Total households responding to agricultural sections</th>
<th>Key informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
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<td>171</td>
<td>163</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>145</td>
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<td>98</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>147</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1330</strong></td>
<td><strong>149</strong></td>
<td><strong>1181</strong></td>
<td><strong>1064</strong></td>
<td><strong>546</strong></td>
<td><strong>720</strong></td>
<td><strong>183</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>738</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
In this report, “agricultural households” or “farming households” refers to the surveyed households who reported being involved in any agricultural activity, be it crop, livestock, fisheries or forestry activities. If involved in more than one agricultural activity, they were then asked about their main one.

Sampling weights were applied to adjust the household sample to reflect the survey population. Design weights used information on household population at the provincial level from 2020 projections, as well as based on the gender and education level of the household head from data from the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC). All results from the household survey presented in this report are weighted.²

Phone-based interviews represented some limitations compared to face-to-face surveys. The main limitation is the possible bias caused by the exclusion of households living in isolated areas without a mobile phone network or who do not own a mobile phone. According to the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSMA), the number of active sim cards in Zimbabwe represents the high proportion of 90 percent of the population (GSMA, 2020), although there is no data on the proportion of population owning and regularly using a mobile phone, particularly in rural areas. There is also no information available on the characteristics of households who do not have access to mobile phone services in relation to different vulnerability indicators. It can, however, be assumed that these households are likely less wealthy and have poorer access to services in general, and therefore may also be less able to cope with shocks. In the absence of evidence, this assumption cannot be substantiated, but there is a possibility that the current survey is missing particularly vulnerable populations, in particular in rural areas. Further research to this end could be conducted in future face-to-face surveys.

² More detailed information on weighted and unweighted counts of respondents by category and disaggregated at the level used for the analysis of results can be found in Annex.
Background

In June 2019, according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimated, nearly 2.3 million people were food insecure, with projections of an increase to nearly 3.6 million people for the October–December 2019 period. This represented, respectively, 25 and 38 percent of the country’s rural population (IPC, 2019). The following IPC analysis in February 2020 estimated that the situation had further deteriorated, with over 4.3 million people, or 45 percent of the rural population, finding themselves in a situation of food insecurity as a result of the poor 2019 agricultural production, which forced households to rely more on markets to access food despite a context of hyperinflation and higher food prices (IPC, 2020). Food access was therefore already constrained before the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the World Bank, poverty levels sharply increased in 2019 and are likely to have worsened further in 2020. In 2019, the number of people in extreme poverty is estimated to have reached 6.6 million, which is double the level from 2011. The number of people facing extreme poverty is projected to have increased from 6.6 million in 2019 to 7.6 million in 2020 under the baseline scenario and to 8 million under a low-case scenario (World Bank, 2020).

That being said, extreme poverty was affecting 40 percent of the population in 2019, up from 33.4 percent in 2017, and with urban poverty rising even faster (from 4 to 10 percent in the same period). Poverty levels are likely to have risen further in 2020 due to continuing economic contractions and loss of employment and income, exacerbated in turn by the restrictions on mobility and the inflationary pressures and drought conditions.
COVID-19 and other risk factors in the country

Crisis context

Zimbabwe has suffered from currency instability since 2007, leading to hyperinflation and the use of a multi-currency system over the past couple of years. However, in June 2019 the Zimbabwe Real Time Gross Settlement dollar (ZWL) was introduced, leading to hyperinflation of 175 percent by mid-July 2019. The year-on-year inflation reached 500 percent by March 2020, 737 percent by July 2020 and 865 percent by August 2020 (World Bank, 2020).

Moreover, GDP contracted by 12.8 percent in 2019 due to poor performance in the mining, tourism and agriculture sectors. Foreign currency and electricity shortages affected mining and tourism as well. Despite a global mineral price recovery, production in Zimbabwe dropped below 2018 levels. In addition, austerity measures from the Transitional Stabilization Programme 2018–2020 and associated monetary reforms constricted economic activity (African Development Bank, 2020).

In March 2019, Zimbabwe was also hit by Cyclone Idai, which mainly affected the eastern and southern provinces, causing floods just after the droughts induced by El Niño weather pattern. Combined with currency shortages and reduced availability of farming inputs, this has resulted in below average agricultural production. For instance, cereal production levels have been particularly erratic over the past five years, with two very poor seasons in 2015 and 2016, followed by two plentiful harvests in 2017 and 2018.

Figure 2. Zimbabwe’s annual cereal production (2015–2019 and 2015–2019 average), annual production in metric tonnes

Source: FAO, 2021a
COVID-19

The first COVID-19 case in Zimbabwe was reported on 20 March 2020 and, as of 21 March 2021, Zimbabwe had reported 36,471 confirmed cases and 1,501 deaths among a population of 14.8 million (WHO, 2020) (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Confirmed COVID-19 cases in Zimbabwe (as of 15 March 2021)

Source: World Health Organization, 2021

COVID-19 was declared a national disaster on 27 March 2020 and a nation-wide lockdown was imposed from 30 March to 16 May. The lockdown restrictions are still in place to date, to varying degrees, and concern movement and travel across cities. Restrictions included the closure of Zimbabwe’s borders to all non-essential travel, except for returning residents and cargo. At the early stages of the containment measures, informal markets were closed, thereby resulting in losses for smallholder farmers and traders. Some of these measures were subsequently lifted, but since Zimbabwe is highly dependent on imports, supply chains have been interrupted and remain fragile.

After the first national lockdown ending on 16 May 2020, companies and the private sector at large have been allowed to operate upon fulfilling certain conditions, such as the compulsory use of masks and the testing of employees in the workplace, including among registered and informal traders.

Following a sharp increase of COVID-19 cases in July 2020, new containment measures were introduced on 22 July, with a curfew imposed between 18.00 and 06.00 hours. Likewise, a limitation of business hours was imposed between 08.00 and 15.00 hours for non-essential businesses. Other measures enforced also affected businesses, with only registered small and medium enterprises with allocated workspaces allowed to operate, in compliance with the parameters and protocols set by WHO. Low-risk sports and permitted gatherings were restricted to take place only between 08.00 and 15.00 hours, whereas public gatherings were limited to 50 people with mandatory sanitizing, physical distancing, temperature checks and wearing of masks.
Agricultural production

Zimbabwe has one main agricultural season in summer that runs from November to April as well as a short winter season with some winter rains running from June to October, mainly on the Central Plateau where the country’s prime agricultural land is located. Conversely, the lowland regions in the East, South and Southwest receive little to no winter rains during the winter season (ZimVAC, 2010).

The planting season for main crops occurs between October and December, with the maize harvest takes place predominantly between March and June. The lean season extends from November to March, including until May for some parts of the country (Figure 4). Annual rainfall ranges from below 450 mm to over 1 000 mm, depending on the agro-ecological region (Table 2).

Figure 4. Zimbabwe crop calendar

Source: FAO 2021; GIEWS and FEWS NET, 2021
Table 2. Classification of natural regions and farming systems in Zimbabwe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural region</th>
<th>Farming systems</th>
<th>Percent of land area</th>
<th>Mean annual rainfall (mm)</th>
<th>Rainfall reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Specialized and diversified farming (forestry; plantations; intensive livestock production)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>&gt; 1 000</td>
<td>Reliable year-round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Intensive farming (cropping, including tobacco and wheat; intensive livestock production)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>750–1 000</td>
<td>Reliable summer rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Semi-intensive farming (cropping can be risky; livestock production)</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>650–750</td>
<td>Erratic with seasonal droughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Semi-extensive farming (drought-resistant cropping; semi-extensive livestock production)</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>450–650</td>
<td>Frequent seasonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Extensive farming (extensive livestock production)</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>&lt; 450</td>
<td>Low, prone to droughts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2004

Agriculture is the backbone of Zimbabwe’s economy, as most Zimbabweans remain largely a rural people who derive their livelihood from agriculture and other related rural economic activities. Agriculture contributed approximately 8 percent to Zimbabwe’s GDP in 2018 (World Bank, 2020b). As the main source of livelihood for most of the population, the performance of agriculture is a key determinant of rural livelihood resilience and
poverty levels. General challenges facing smallholder farmers include low and erratic rainfall, low and declining soil fertility, low investment, shortages of farm power, labour and draft animals, poor physical and institutional infrastructure, poverty and recurring food insecurity. Agricultural production is also vulnerable to periodic droughts. The subsistence farming sector, which produces 70 percent of staple foods (maize, millets, and groundnuts), is particularly vulnerable, as it has access to less than 5 percent of national irrigation facilities (FAO, 2021b).

According to the survey findings, a very high proportion of surveyed households work in agriculture (89 percent), ranging from 78 percent of those surveyed in Matabeleland North to 95 percent of those in Mashonaland East working in crop or livestock production, and 46 percent overall working in both crop and livestock production.

**Crop production**

**Crop production in previous years**

Crop production has been erratic in the past years, with 2017 and 2018 representing very good harvests and 2019 representing a harvest below the 5-year average (Figure 6). The bulk of the cereal production is made by maize cultivated during the summer season, while wheat is the only crop cultivated during the winter season.

![Figure 6. Zimbabwe national cereal production in 2014–2019, annual production in metric tonnes](source: FAO, 2021a)

**The 2020 crop season in Zimbabwe**

Maize was by far the most widely cultivated crop, with 57 percent of surveyed households who responded to the crop section of the survey reporting having cultivated it as their main crop during the summer season (Figure 7). Overall, 80 percent of rural households also planted maize, according to the Rural Livelihoods Assessment (RLA) report (ZimVAC, 2020a).
There are significant differences across provinces in the proportion of surveyed households cultivating maize as their main crop. Sorghum was reported as more important in Matabeleland South, tobacco and groundnuts were more prevalent in Mashonaland Central and perennial crops were more dominant in Manicaland (Figure 8).
The bulk of the national maize production comes from the Mashonaland provinces, which host most of the commercial farms with larger cultivated areas and higher yields.

The 2019/20 season was characterized by a late onset of rains across the country and false starts in the southern and south-eastern parts of the country, which affected crop establishment (ZimVAC, 2020b). Temporal and spatial distribution of rainfall was generally poor throughout the season, with some dry spells and the rainfall season ending early in the southern areas (early March).

However, in other areas, the rains improved later in the season, resulting in an improvement in crop conditions in March and a late harvest in June, as shown in Figure 9 comparing rainfall and the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) with the long-term average (1994–2013). Beyond this national average, rainfall was relatively adequate in the main cropping areas of Mashonaland Central, West and East, yet it remained inadequate in other areas.
Difficulties with the 2020 cropping season

The majority (84 percent) of crop-producing surveyed households reported having faced unusual difficulties with their crop production over the past three months, particularly in Masvingo and Manicaland (Figure 10). Although the sample size is small, it appears that farmers who cultivate perennial crop as their main crop faced particular difficulties, probably in relation to labour and harvesting-related concerns, as will be discussed further below. Crop-producing surveyed households who cultivated small grains as their
main crop also reported higher difficulties during this season (Figure 11), which were likely linked to unfavourable rainfall, as half of them are located in the Matabeleland South province that received particularly low rainfall.

Figure 10. Crop-producing households reporting unusual difficulties with their crop production over the past three months, by province

(n = 563)

Figure 11. Proportion of crop-producing households reporting unusual difficulties with their crop production over the past three months, by main crop cultivated

(n = 563)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
When asked about the two main difficulties faced in crop production over the past three months, drought was the most widely reported difficulty, as identified by 60 percent of crop-producing households. This was followed, far behind, by the difficulty to access fertilizers and pesticides (as reported by 26 percent of crop-producing households) (Figure 12).

The difficulty in accessing seeds was the third most widely reported difficulty, as identified by 14 percent of crop-producing households. It is worth mentioning that the access to seeds for the summer season (during which the main crops are cultivated) was not affected by COVID-19-related disruptions, given that planting takes place between November and January.

Figure 12. Top two main difficulties faced in crop production over the past three months, as reported by crop-producing households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drypsels/droughts</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in accessing fertilizers or pesticides</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in accessing seeds</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower irrigation levels</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of perspective on possibility to sell products or prices</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak of pests or diseases</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour too expensive/insufficient income to hire labour</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in accessing finance or credit</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted access to land/work (containment measures)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour is not available</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

The types of difficulties reported by crop-producing households varied between provinces, with certain difficulties being more widely reported in some regions vis-à-vis the national average (Figure 13), as follows.

- A lack of market opportunities in order to sell the production in Manicaland (as reported by 27 percent of crop-producers);
- Lower-than-usual irrigation levels in Masvingo (17 percent);
- Increased cost of labour in Matabeleland North and South (16 percent in each province);
- Difficulty in accessing credit in Mashonaland East (11 percent);
- Difficulty in accessing land in Mashonaland East and Masvingo (10 and 9 percent, respectively);
- Outbreaks of pests and diseases in Midlands and Masvingo (11 percent in each province).
Agricultural district officers from the AGRITEX department of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement who were interviewed as key informants confirmed the aforementioned difficulties, in particular with respect to droughts and pests (Figure 14). They also cited the difficulties in accessing fertilizers and pesticides as well as seeds.

According to the ZimVAC RLA released in October 2020, 61 percent of rural households growing maize reported fall armyworm outbreaks, including up to 74 percent of households in Masvingo. This represents an increasing trend, up from 36 percent of affected households in 2017. This helps explain why accessing pesticides was cited as a particular concern for many.
Difficulties with summer crop harvesting

By the time the survey was conducted in July–August 2020, most of the summer crops had been harvested. Only vegetable production and harvesting was still underway, as it continues throughout the winter season. No major issues were raised in terms of not being able to harvest some of the production because of COVID-19-related restrictions and their impact on mobility and labour availability, except with respect to perennial crops (Figure 15).

In this case, although the sample of surveyed households involved in perennial crop production was very small (with only 23 respondents), they were fairly unanimous in reporting that some of their production could not be harvested because of issues related to COVID-19-related restrictions. This was the case since perennial crop harvesting, such as for fruits, tea and coffee, is very labour intensive.
The key informants interviewed also reported difficulties in harvesting summer crops, particularly in Mashonaland West, Central and Midlands. The main causes of these harvesting difficulties were linked to labour either being unavailable or economically inaccessible, as well as to COVID-19-related restrictions.

**Expected crop production for the 2020 summer season**

The Second Crop and Livestock Assessment (CLA) 2020 indicates a national maize production for 2020 that is higher than the previous year by 17 percent, with a smaller total area cultivated, but with higher yields. The 2019 maize production levels were 26 percent below the 2014–2018 average production levels, while the 2020 maize production is almost 13 percent below that 5-year average.

The 2020 national cereal production during the summer season is estimated to be slightly below the 5-year average, which included two abundant harvests, but still above the 2019 levels (Figure 16).
At the provincial level, the Second CLA 2020 reported an increase in maize production levels in most provinces except for Mashonaland East and Masvingo, compared to the previous season (Table 3).

Table 3. Maize production for 2020, by province (in metric tonnes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>51 070</td>
<td>65 867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>159 184</td>
<td>182 938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>153 831</td>
<td>129 385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>228 073</td>
<td>309 984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>13 031</td>
<td>20 002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>16 781</td>
<td>25 833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>93 703</td>
<td>123 162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>60 962</td>
<td>50 458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>776 635</td>
<td>907 628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, at the household level the ZimVAC RLA 2020 reported maize production levels to be 7 percent lower than last year and 29 percent lower for small grains. The difference between national and household production levels can be attributed to the contribution of commercial farms that appear to have performed better than smallholders in the context of low rainfall. Likewise, commercial farms are mostly situated in the Mashonaland areas, which have more favourable agro-climatic conditions in general, including during 2020.

The ZimVAC RLA 2020 reports higher cereal production levels in Matabeleland South, North and Manicaland compared to 2019, and significantly lower levels in Masvingo, Mashonaland West, Central and Midlands (Table 4).
Table 4. Household level cereal production in 2020, by province (in kilograms)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Small grains</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Small grains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>164.6</td>
<td>200.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>351.2</td>
<td>290.9</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>297.1</td>
<td>279.5</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>433.3</td>
<td>314.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>261.3</td>
<td>201.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>204.8</td>
<td>142.4</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td><strong>233.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>202.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ZimVAC, 2020b*

Since the survey that was conducted as part of this assessment did not quantify the area cultivated and the production levels, it is not possible to directly compare production quantities. However, both the key informants interviewed and the surveyed households reported lower production levels compared to last year, both for overall summer crops and for maize.

Seventy-six percent of crop-producing surveyed households reported lower production levels in their main summer crop compared to last year (Figure 17). Among them, 43 percent reported their production to be less than half of last year’s. Similarly, around the same proportion of key informants reported a decrease in production levels, although of a less severe extent. This may be from including commercial or wealthier farmers whose profiles are not represented among the surveyed households.

Eighty percent of farmers growing maize as their main crop reported lower production levels compared to last year (Figure 18). Once again, the same proportion of key informants also reported lower production levels, yet of a less severe extent as well.
Figure 17. Summer crop production levels in comparison to the previous year, as estimated by crop-producing households (n = 563) and reported by key informants (n = 83).

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Figure 18. Maize production levels in comparison to the previous year, as estimated by crop-producing households (n = 320) and key informants (n = 71).

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
It is therefore important to note the difference between national production and household-level production levels that were lower compared to last year, which was already a below-average production year nationwide. Crop-producing households from Masvingo also reported a particularly sharp decrease in their summer crop production levels, in line with the ZimVAC results.

In addition, crop-producing households reported significant difficulties with crop storage, with nearly half of them reporting damages due to pests gaining access to stored crops (Figure 19). They also reported difficulties in accessing grain protectants (26 percent of households) and a lack of adequate storage infrastructure or equipment (15 percent). Although these issues may not be specific to this year, they led to post-harvest crop losses, which are particularly concerning in a context of reduced crop production and constrained access to food during 2020.

![Figure 19. Proportion of crop-producing households reporting difficulties with crop storage, by type of difficulty reported](n = 545)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attack by pests</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavailability of grain protectants in local markets</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High prices of grain protectants</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of money to buy grain protectants</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of hermetic bags or similar</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of appropriate storage infrastructure</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adequate storage space</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

**Crop production plans for the winter season**

Nationwide, 12 percent of crop-producing households surveyed indicated that they will not grow crops for the winter season even though they usually do. The proportion of households reporting this was as high as 17 percent in Mashonaland Central and 20 percent in Mashonaland East. In Matabeleland North and South, more crop farmers cultivate during the winter season compared to other provinces.

The main winter crops are vegetables for 54 percent of crop-producing households, followed by beans (Figure 20). Wheat is farmed as a main winter crop only by 3 percent of crop respondents, as it is mostly cultivated by commercial farms.
Figure 20. Main crops cultivated or planned to be cultivated during this winter season, as reported by crop-producing households
(n = 506)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Overall, 29 percent of crop-producing households surveyed reported that they are or will be cultivating smaller areas than last year for the winter season, while 22 percent reported that they are or will be cultivating larger areas (Figure 21). The decrease in cultivation areas is particularly significant in Masvingo (as reported by 48 percent of crop-producing households) and Mashonaland East (43 percent).

In looking specifically at the two main winter crops cultivated, 32 percent of crop-producing households reported to be planning to grow smaller areas for vegetables, while 23 percent reported planning to grow larger areas; similar proportions were reported for the cultivation of beans (Figure 22).
Figure 21. Area planted or planned to be planted with main winter crop compared to last year, by province and as reported by crop-producing households (n = 411)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Figure 22. Area planted or planned to be planted with vegetables (n = 300) and beans (n = 51) as main winter crops compared to last year, as reported by crop-producing households

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Access to seeds for the winter season

As outlined before, crops cultivated by smallholders during the winter season are mainly vegetable and legumes, and farmers usually purchase vegetable seeds rather than retain from their own production, with only 8 percent of crop-producing households using seeds from their own stocks. Against this backdrop, 62 percent of crop-producing households reported having faced difficulties in accessing seeds for the winter season (Figure 23).

This is in line with reports from the key informants, two-thirds of whom reported that farmers in their area are facing these types of difficulties. According to the key informants, one-third of farmers are facing minor difficulties and one-third are facing severe difficulties.

Crop-producing households in Mashonaland East and Masvingo reported particularly marked difficulties in accessing winter seeds, with 75 and 71 percent of households reporting difficulties, respectively (Figure 23). These two provinces were also the ones with the highest proportion of crop-producing households reporting planting smaller areas with their main winter crop in comparison to last year (Figure 21).

![Figure 23. Proportion of crop respondents reporting difficulties in accessing seeds for the winter season, by province (n = 408)](source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results)
Among the top two main difficulties in accessing seeds for the winter season are the economic access to seeds (given their higher prices), as reported by 60 percent of crop-producing households, and insufficient income, as reported by 29 percent of households (Figure 24).

However, the availability of seeds was also identified as a significant issue (41 percent of households reported not being able to find seeds from their local markets and 10 percent of households reported not being able to find seeds from vendors. The physical limitations in accessing markets to buy seeds (as reported by 11 percent of households), the availability of specific seed varieties (10 percent) and the disruptions in seed assistance programmes (9 percent) were also reported by households, although to a smaller extent.

Nonetheless, there are significant differences in the types of difficulties reported across provinces (Figure 25).

- Issues concerning the availability of seeds were particularly reported in Mashonaland Central and, to a lesser extent, in Midlands (67 and 36 percent of households, respectively, against 24 percent of households nationwide);
- Issues concerning higher prices were more widely reported Manicaland (71 percent of households, against 41 percent of households nationwide); and
- Disruptions in seed assistance programmes was of particular concern in Matabeleland North and South (17 percent of households, against 2 percent of households nationwide).
Livestock production

Livestock and livestock products contribute significantly to the economy of Zimbabwe, with cattle accounting for 35–38 percent of the GDP share that contributed by the agricultural sector (FAO, 2021b).

Cattle are the esteemed stock, providing a traditional saving mechanism and critical safety net during years of hardship. Cattle are often owned by middle-class and wealthier producers, and less commonly so by the poor and very poor. The highest cattle holdings are in the low veld areas along the border with South Africa and Botswana, where the better-off herds can be as large as 20 animals and the poorer herds can be of 3–5 animals; this is comparable to the middle-class groups in other parts of the country. Goats are slaughtered and sold more often and provide both food and cash income. Goat herds are larger than cattle herds, owned even by some very poor households (ZimVAC, 2010).

Over half of the surveyed households (51 percent) are involved in livestock farming, and 10 percent of them draw their main source of income from the sale of livestock or livestock products. Therefore, livestock is mainly kept for subsistence and the generation of small cash income. Since the sample of surveyed households responding to the livestock section was small (183), the results are disaggregated only between...
Matabeleland North and South (the two main livestock-producing provinces) and other provinces (Figure 26).

Poultry is the most widespread type of animal ownership, followed by small ruminants and cattle. Cattle is more present in Matabeleland North and South than in other provinces (59 percent of livestock-producing households compared to 36 percent of livestock-producing households in other provinces), while small ruminants and poultry are also kept in similar proportions (Figure 26). Livestock farmers in Matabeleland South also own a larger number of cattle and small ruminants on average (ZimVAC, 2020a).

Figure 26. Types of animals owned by livestock-producing households in Matabeleland North and South and other provinces (n = 183)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Changes in livestock ownership

Seventy-four percent of livestock-producing households surveyed reported owning fewer animals compared to the same time last year. Among them, the decreased animal ownership represented 30 percent fewer animals altogether. The decrease in livestock ownership is not significantly more important in other provinces than it is in Matabeleland North and South.

However, since it was not possible to disaggregate the findings by type of animal and, considering that the main animals in Matabeleland North and South are cattle compared to small ruminants and poultry in other provinces, the value of losses would be clearly higher in Matabeleland North and South (Figure 27).
When asked about the reasons behind the decrease in ownership, livestock-producing households pointed to distress sales to obtain cash (45 percent of households), distress sales given an inability to feed the animals (35 percent), higher animal mortality rates (38 percent) and culling for household consumption (26 percent) (Figure 28).

The sample of livestock-producing households is too small in order to draw significant conclusions, but surveyed households in Matabeleland North and South tended to report higher sales due to the inability to feed their animals (53 percent, against 27 percent in other provinces), the need for cash (53 percent, against 42 percent in other provinces) and higher mortality rates (45 percent, against 35 percent in other provinces) (Figure 28). Conversely, surveyed households in other provinces tended to report better sales than usual (9 percent, against only 1 percent in Matabeleland North and South).
Figure 28. Reasons for fewer main animals owned by livestock-producing households in Matabeleland North and South and other provinces, compared to the same time last year (n = 97)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Matabeleland North and South</th>
<th>Rest of provinces</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher mortality due to lack of veterinary services</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better sales than usual</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress sales for urgent cash needed</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to feed animals</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culled for household consumption</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Difficulties with livestock rearing

Overall, 88 percent of livestock-producing households reported having faced unusual difficulties in raising their animals over the past three months; almost half of them reported having experienced significant difficulties (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Unusual difficulties faced by livestock-producing households in raising their livestock over the past three months in Matabeleland North and South and other provinces (n = 183)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Matabeleland North and South</th>
<th>Rest of provinces</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher mortality due to lack of veterinary services</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better sales than usual</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress sales for urgent cash needed</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to feed animals</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Livestock-producing households in Matabeleland North and South reported more issues related to insufficient rainfall and an early end of the rainy season than households in other provinces (Figure 30). Reported issues with constrained access to water (47 percent of households against 28 percent in other provinces) and to pasture (43 percent, against 15 percent) were in line with the higher proportion of surveyed households in these provinces indicating that they owned fewer animals than usual because they had to sell them as they could not feed them (Figure 28). Other provinces reported more issues in
Key informants confirmed that livestock diseases and lack of veterinary services (as reported by 8 and 2 informants, respectively, out of 21 who were interviewed) were the major issue with livestock rearing, followed by the lack of pasture and water (as reported by 7 of the 21 informants) (Figure 31).

The livestock disease reported by all key informants is theileriosis, also known locally as “January disease” since outbreaks happen during the rainy month of January. It is an acute, frequently fatal disease of cattle caused by a tick-borne infection (*Theileria parva*), which occurs in Zimbabwe (Anipedia, 2017). The disease causes a significant number of deaths each year in Zimbabwe (50 000 in 2018), calling for the implementation of intensive dipping regulations to control its vector. However, there were already reports in 2019 that foreign currency shortages were making it increasingly difficult to import dipping chemicals (The Sunday Mail, 2019).
Figure 31. Main issues experienced by livestock farmers, according to agricultural district officers interviewed as key informants (n = 21)

- Livestock disease: 7
- Lack of regular veterinary services: 8
- Lack of pasture and water: 1
- Labour restrictions due to COVID-19: 1
- Abattoirs closed or working under restrictions: 1
- Other: 2

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Food supply and markets

Marketing of agricultural products

All surveyed households whose main source of income comes from agriculture were asked questions about the marketing of their production (738 households in total), making a total sample size of 673 agricultural households marketing some of their production at this time of the year and who answered the questions for this section of the survey. Of these households surveyed, and who were involved in crop and/or livestock production, 70 percent obtain their main source of income from the sale of crops, while the remaining 30 percent do so from the sale of livestock and livestock products. The disaggregation between crop and livestock-producing households in this section refers to households obtaining their main source of income from the sale of crop or livestock products. Around 10 percent of crop-producing households were not selling any of their production at the time of the survey, while almost all livestock-producing households were selling at least some of their products.

Among those selling some of their production, when comparing the level of sales of agricultural products over the past three months with the same period last year, an overwhelming 76 percent of them reported a lower level of sales (Figure 32). As for crop-producing households, they reported a more severe decrease in sales than that of livestock-producing households, with 70 percent of them reporting a drastic or significant decrease in sales, against only 59 percent of livestock-producing households reporting the same level in decreased sales. This is in line with reports indicated earlier with respect to higher sales of animals due to the need for cash or the difficulties faced in maintaining and feeding their animals.

Figure 32. Change in agricultural sales over the past three months compared to the same period last year, as reported by surveyed households whose main source of income comes from the sale of crop or livestock products (n = 673)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
In line with this, the reported decrease in sales is above the national average in Mashonaland East, where the proportion of agricultural households reporting decreased sales was highest (Figure 33). Conversely, the proportion of agricultural households reporting decreased sales was below average in Matabeleland North and South, where involvement in livestock production is the highest.

**Figure 33.** Change in agricultural sales over the past three months compared to the same period last year, as reported by surveyed households selling agricultural products, by province

\(n = 673\)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
In parallel, 86 percent of agricultural households reported having faced unusual difficulties over the past three months in marketing their agricultural production, with a higher proportion of crop-producing households reporting difficulties compared to livestock-producing households (Figure 34).

Figure 34. Unusual difficulties faced by surveyed households over the past three months in marketing their agricultural production

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Eighty-six percent of key informants also reported that farmers in their areas were facing difficulties in market their production. Among them, 37 percent reported that farmers were not managing to find alternative channels to market their production (Figure 35).

Figure 35. Proportion of farmers facing difficulties in marketing their production, according to agricultural district officers interviewed as key informants

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Overall, the constrained access to markets due to market restrictions or market closures was the main difficulty, as reported by 57 percent of agricultural households surveyed (Figure 36). The other most commonly reported difficulty were the higher-than-usual transportation costs (as reported by 40 percent of agricultural households), the lower-than-usual prices (38 percent) and the lower-than-usual demand (37 percent).

The marketing of crops was more widely affected by the constrained access to markets and by higher transportation costs than for the marketing of livestock and livestock products. This is due to the fact that vegetables, which were the main crop on sale in that period, are perishable products. The marketing of livestock and livestock products, on the other hand, was more widely affected by lower demand and prices, as consumers usually decrease their consumption of meat products first whenever facing economic constraints such as the ones experienced.

Figure 36. Main difficulties in marketing production over the past three months as reported by agricultural households reporting difficulties, by type of agricultural production (N=520)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Nonetheless, the types of difficulties reported by households also differed across provinces (Figure 37), including:

- Constrained access to markets being a particular concern in Mashonaland West and Central and in Manicaland;
- Lower demand than usual particularly reported in Midlands;
- Transportation costs bearing a particularly high impact in Mashonaland East; and
- Lower producer prices being reported in Mashonaland East and Masvingo.
Figure 37. Main difficulties in marketing production over the past three months as reported by agricultural households reporting difficulties, by province

(n = 520)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Over 90 of the key informants interviewed also reported disruptions in the transportation of agricultural products and, among them, 26 percent reported strong disruptions and 3 percent reported full blockages (Figure 38).

Figure 38. Disruptions in the transportation of agricultural production, as reported by agricultural district officers interviewed as key informants

(n = 118)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
In line with these marketing difficulties, 55 percent of agricultural households surveyed reported that part of their agricultural production went to waste and, among them, 15 percent reported having a large part of their production going to waste (Figure 39). The proportion of households reporting their production going to waste is particularly high in Manicaland, possibly related to the difficulties presented before with respect to the harvests of perennial crops.

Figure 39. Proportion of agricultural households reporting a share of their agricultural production going to waste due to marketing difficulties over the past three months, by province (n = 520)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

The proportion of agricultural households reporting part of their productions going to waste due to marketing and storage difficulties is highest among those who obtain their main source of income from the sale of orchard products. However, the sample size is too small for this conclusion to be reliable. Overall, crop-producing households reported facing higher levels of production going to waste (59 percent of households) compared to livestock-producing households (40 percent of households) (Figure 40).

Among crop-producing households, those selling vegetables (i.e. perishable products) reported the highest levels of production going to waste. On the other hand, livestock-producing households faced fewer losses, as animals are usually sold alive and are therefore less subject to time-constrained marketing windows compared with perishable products.
In looking at producer prices, 67 percent of agricultural households reported producer prices being much lower than usual for that time of the year (Figure 41). This was reported in similar proportion and severity among crop and livestock-producing households alike.

The level of the decrease in prices was reported as more severe by those households obtaining their main source of income from the sale of vegetables. This is in line with the reports of production going to waste due to marketing difficulties, especially for perishable products.

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Figure 40. Extent of agricultural production going to waste due to marketing and storage difficulties, by main income source (n = 555)\(^4\)

![Bar chart showing percentage of agricultural production going to waste by type of product and main income source.](chart.png)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

\(^4\) Unweighted.
Food availability and prices

Forty-one out of 119 key informants reported that levels of food availability in markets was much lower than usual for this time of the year (Figure 42). Low food availability was reported by key informants in the same range for all provinces, with the largest proportion of key informants reporting decreased food availability in Midlands (17 of the 20 key informants), Manicaland (9 of the 15 key informants) and Mashonaland Central (14 out of 20 key informants). Marked decreases in food availability were reported, to a greater extent, in Matabeleland North and South.

---

5 Unweighted.
A combination of sustained currency weakness and low domestic supplies have exerted strong upward pressure on food prices since the second half of 2019, causing abrupt increases and sustaining high levels. The annual food inflation rate in August was estimated at 865 percent (Figure 43).

Maize meal is the main staple food, grown and consumed throughout the country, with the northern and eastern provinces being its main producers. The price for a 10-kg bag of maize meal has increased, on average, across the eight rural provinces from 19 to 250 ZWL between June 2019 and June 2020 (i.e. a 1,200 percent increase). In June 2020, the prices were highest in Matabeleland South and Masvingo (Figure 44).

---

6 Per capita consumption of maize and its products averaged 98 kg per year between 2010 and 2014, and total per capita cereal consumption was estimated at 127 kg per year for this period. Zimbabwe imports, on average, about 23 percent of its maize consumption requirements (FAO, 2020).
The low levels of domestic harvests exerted additional upward pressure on prices and resulted in substantial import needs that have accentuated the effects of imported inflation on domestic food prices. In order to ease the pressure on import prices, given the expected large import requirements in the 2020/21 marketing year, the Government temporarily suspended import tariffs on wheat and maize products as of May 2020 (FAO, 2020).
Livelihoods and incomes and coping strategies

Agricultural livelihoods and incomes

Eighty-nine percent of households surveyed were involved in agricultural production, with the majority of these involved in crop production (84 percent), while 51 percent were involved in livestock production (Figure 45). A large proportion of surveyed households are involved in both crop and livestock production (46 percent of the total sample), compared to those involved in crop production only (38 percent). The proportion of those involved in livestock production only is very low (5 percent).

![Figure 45. Livelihood activities of households surveyed](n = 1 330)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

At the provincial level, the proportion of agricultural households surveyed ranges from 78 percent in Matabeleland North to 95 percent in Mashonaland East. Nationwide, 84 percent are involved in crop production and 52 percent are involved in livestock rearing (Figure 46). The proportion of surveyed households involved in crop production is higher in the Mashonaland provinces, while the proportion of households involved in livestock rearing is higher in the southern provinces of Matabeleland and Masvingo, in line with the agricultural profile of the country.
Fifty-six percent of surveyed households obtain their main income source from agriculture, while 44 percent of them do so from non-agricultural activities. The main sources of income overall are self-employment (18 percent), sale of field crops (17 percent), sale of vegetables (15 percent), salaried work (13 percent), sale of livestock (10 percent) and sale of cash crops (9 percent) (Figure 47).
Households drawing income from agriculture had more diversified income sources, with only 34 percent of them drawing the totality (or almost the totality) of their household income from agriculture, compared to 52 percent who obtained the totality (or almost the totality) of their income non-agricultural activities (Figure 48).

Changes in income

Overall, 82 percent of surveyed households reported a decrease in income, with 47 percent of these reporting a drastic decrease (of over 50 percent) in their income over the past three months compared to the same period last year (Figure 49).

Varying degrees of decreases in income were most widely reported in Mashonaland East (89 percent of households), against 62 percent in Matabeleland North and South. This can be related to the marketing difficulties and the production going to waste that were reported in Mashonaland East, where the sale of vegetables is a major income source this season.

According to the ZimVAC RLA 2020, the monthly farmer income for April 2020 (before the harvest) was USD 33, compared to USD 44 the year before.
Figure 49. Extent of changes in income over the past three months compared to the same period last year, by province

(n = 1 326)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

The proportion of households reporting decreases in income is not significantly higher among female-headed households (84 percent) than among male-headed households (81 percent).

However, the degree of the decrease in incomes is more severe among female-headed households, with 53 percent of female-headed households reporting a drastic decrease in their income (a decrease of over 50 percent), compared to 44 percent of male-headed households reporting this same degree of income decrease (Figure 50).

Figure 50. Extent of changes in income over the past three months compared to the same period last year, by female and male-headed households

(n = 1 326)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Households drawing their main source of income from agriculture reported, in a slightly higher proportion, decreases in their income (88 percent reporting a decrease), against 80 percent of households whose main source of income is from non-agricultural activities (Figure 51).

Figure 51. Extent in changes in income over the past three months compared to the same period last year, by agricultural and non-agricultural households

![Chart showing income changes](chart.png)

When asked about the types of shocks faced over the past three months, the main ones reported by households affected were increased prices (as reported by 54 percent of surveyed households) and restriction measures (52 percent) (Figure 52). Other shocks, of economic nature, were also mentioned, such as income losses (32 percent) and higher production costs (23 percent). In this respect, 22 percent of surveyed households reported reduced production levels.

Twenty-four percent of households also reported the sickness of a household member and 9 percent reported the death of a household member as a shock. This may not directly reflect a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, but rather bespeak of overall disruptions in the national health system.

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Respondents involved in agriculture were more likely to experience shocks related to higher production costs and reduction in production, while those not involved in agriculture pointed more to the restriction measures and income losses (Figure 53).
Food security

As outlined before, the main harvest usually takes place in April–May and the lean season usually extends from November to March. However, in 2020, the harvest season was delayed to around June due to the late start of rains.

Both IPC and ZimVAC data point to a deterioration of food insecurity over the past two years. According to the ZimVAC RLA 2020 report, the proportion of households with poor or borderline food consumption has increased from 45 percent in 2018 to 69 percent in 2020, with data also collected at the post-harvest time (ZimVAC, 2020a).

Questions around food consumption, food insecurity and hunger were asked to the entire sample of 1,330 rural households. In order to assess the food insecurity situation in the 30 days prior to the interview of the population covered, the survey applied an extended version of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) module. In addition to the standard eight questions referring to conditions and experiences typically associated with the inability to access food, this version includes frequency follow-up questions to the three more severe items, thus allowing to compute the Household Hunger Scale (HHS).

As such, in addition to being able to produce estimates of the prevalence of recent food insecurity (RFI) based on the thresholds used by FAO to define “moderate” and “severe” food insecurity in the context of the global SDG monitoring process, estimates can also be produced based on the “moderate” and “severe” hunger classes that are consistent with those traditionally used with the HHS.  

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7 In the context of the SDG global monitoring progress, individuals or households are assigned a probability of being beyond the thresholds defined for “moderate” or “severe” food insecurity. These thresholds are used to produce two indicators: (1) the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population based on FIES, which is the sum of the proportion of the population affected by moderate food insecurity plus the proportion classified as severely food insecure; and (2) the prevalence of severe food insecurity in the population based on FIES, which is computed by considering only the severe food insecurity class. According to these thresholds used by FAO to define food insecurity levels, people experiencing moderate food insecurity face uncertainties about their ability to obtain food and have been forced to reduce, at times during the reference period, the quality and/or quantity of food they consume due to lack of money or other resources. It thus refers to a lack of consistent access to food, which diminishes dietary quality, disrupts usual eating patterns and can have negative consequences for nutrition, health and well-being. People facing severe food insecurity, on the other hand, have likely run out of food, experienced hunger and, in the most extreme scenario, have gone for days without eating, putting their health and well-being at grave risk. When estimates are based on household surveys, food insecurity conditions are reported as experienced by any of the household members.

8 According to the official HHS manual, household are classified as having suffered from “moderate hunger” if they report a household hunger score of 2–3, and from “severe hunger” if they report a score of 4–6. For more information, see https://bit.ly/3a4G0q4 and, in particular, https://bit.ly/3aYYQj1 (Table 6, Page 13). Based on this, two additional indicators can be produced: (1) the prevalence of households experiencing moderate or severe hunger, which is the sum of the proportion of households affected by moderate hunger plus the proportion of households with severe hunger; and (2) the prevalence of households experiencing severe hunger. By assumption, the prevalence of moderate or severe hunger represents a more severe condition than the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity and a less severe condition than the prevalence of severe food insecurity, whereas the prevalence of severe hunger characterizes a more severe condition than the prevalence of severe food insecurity.
The estimates of the prevalence of RFI and hunger, both referring to the 30 days prior to the interview, at different levels of severity are presented in Table 5, for the sample as a whole as well as disaggregated by provinces, by household type and by gender of the household head. Reported estimates also include margins of error, reflecting the impact of both sampling and non-sampling errors.

Table 5. Percentage of surveyed households affected by recent food insecurity and hunger, by province, type of household and by gender of household head (n = 1 330)\(^9\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recent Food Insecurity</th>
<th>Hunger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RFI(_{mod+sev})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By province</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>70.09 (±20.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>70.55 (±24.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>74.11 (±12.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>71.83 (±17.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>70.19 (±30.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>78.79 (±14.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>71.32 (±14.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>77.49 (±15.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By type of household</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>71.82 (±7.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-agricultural</td>
<td>82.84 (±13.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By gender of household head</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male-headed households</td>
<td>69.62 (±7.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households</td>
<td>80.23 (±14.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>72.80 (±6.90)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

These results point to high food insecurity in the period investigated, especially considering that the data was collected in July–August, just two months after the harvest and well before the start of the lean season. Overall, around 73 percent of the surveyed households were found to have experienced moderate to severe levels of RFI, with the highest proportion being found in the province of Matabeleland North, followed by Masvingo.

Across all provinces, around one-third of households were affected by severe levels of RFI, meaning that people in these households felt hungry but could not eat, or did not eat for an entire day, due to lack of money or other resources.

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\(^9\) Hunger\(_{mod+sev}\): moderate + severe hunger; Hunger\(_{sev}\): severe hunger; RFI\(_{mod+sev}\): moderate + severe recent food insecurity; RFI\(_{sev}\): severe recent food insecurity. Margins of error based on 90 percent confidence intervals are reported in parenthesis.
The analysis of FIES data also reveals that over half of the households in the investigated provinces were suffering from moderate or severe hunger, a condition that is expected to be more severe than moderate or severe RFI. The highest prevalence rates were found in the province of Masvingo, followed by Matabeleland North. This finding is in line with the ZimVAC RLA 2020 data of poorer food consumption levels in these two provinces.

By looking at the results by household type, findings show that non-agricultural households tend to have higher food insecurity and hunger levels than agricultural households. Also, the prevalence of food insecurity and hunger is higher among female-headed households than male-headed households. In both cases, differences are within the margins of error and, thus, not statistically significant.

Food consumption levels

The survey used for this assessment included questions on food consumption from specific food groups, asking respondents about their experience on changes observed over the previous three months, compared to what is deemed usual for the same period of the year.

When asked about which food groups they have been consuming less of over the past three months, compared to what is normal for the same period, cereals were by far the most reported food group, with 79 percent of surveyed households reporting lower consumption levels (Figure 54). This was followed by sugar (56 percent), meat (53 percent) and oil (49 percent). While the reduction in meat and sugar consumption levels indicates an economic constraint in accessing food, in turn driving households to reduce their consumption of more expensive foods, the reduction in oil consumption, and especially the reduction in consumption of cereals, points to severe constraints in ensuring the usual quantity of food consumed.

Figure 54. Proportion of households reporting lower consumption levels across twelve food groups over the past three months, compared to usual consumption levels for the same period

(n = 1330)

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
The decrease in meat consumption is particularly marked in Matabeleland North, and less so in Mashonaland East (Figure 55). Yet, meat consumption levels may have been higher in Matabeleland North in the first place, considering the higher livestock ownership in the province. Decreases in cereal consumption levels were particularly noteworthy in Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Midlands (Figure 56).

Figure 55. Proportion of households reporting lower consumption levels of meat and poultry products over the past three months, compared to usual consumption levels for the same period, by province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Proportion of Households Reporting Lower Consumption Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

Figure 56. Proportion of households reporting lower consumption levels of cereals over the past three months, compared to usual consumption levels for the same period, by province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Proportion of Households Reporting Lower Consumption Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results
Most affected population groups and needs

Needs expressed by respondents

All surveyed households (n = 1 330) were asked whether they needed assistance in supporting their agricultural production in the short term (over the coming three months). Ninety-five percent of them replied affirmatively (n = 1 261).

Among all surveyed households, the most urgent need expressed was food assistance, as reported by 25 percent of households, followed by seeds (20 percent), fertilizers (15 percent) and cash assistance (15 percent) (Figure 57).

When asked about the three main needs in the short term, seeds was the need most widely expressed need overall (53 percent), followed by food assistance (48 percent), fertilizers (44 percent) and cash assistance (40 percent).

The types and extent of needs reported are similar across provinces, besides the dominance of livestock-related needs in Matabeleland North and South. The needs for food assistance is also higher in Mashonaland East (Figure 57).
Figure 58. Aggregated responses for the three main needs reported by surveyed households to help support their production in the upcoming three months, by province (n = 1 261)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Seeds</th>
<th>Food assistance</th>
<th>Fertilizers</th>
<th>Cash assistance</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Pesticides</th>
<th>Irrigation</th>
<th>Loans</th>
<th>Animal feed</th>
<th>Tools/machinery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland South</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland East</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland West</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland Central</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results

As for agricultural households who obtain their main income from the sale of crops, they reported their main needs for the following three months to be seeds (24 percent), fertilizers (24 percent) and food assistance (21 percent) (Figure 59).

Figure 59. Main needs reported by households whose main source of income comes from crop production to help support their short production in the coming three months (n = 533)
As for agricultural households whose main source of incomes comes from the sale of livestock and livestock products, their main needs for the upcoming three months were more diverse, including cash assistance (19 percent), food assistance (16 percent), animal feed (11 percent), access to water for animals (7 percent) and animal health support, such as veterinary services (7 percent) and veterinary inputs (6 percent) (Figure 60).

Figure 60. Main needs reported by households whose main source of income comes from livestock production to help support their short production in the coming three months 

(n = 177)
Disruption in assistance

Seventy-eight out of the 118 key informants interviewed reported that assistance programmes had been taking place in their area before the COVID-19 pandemic. Among them, 47 reported that these programmes had been disrupted since (Figure 61).

Figure 61. Disruptions in the provision of assistance since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, as reported by agricultural district officers interviewed as key informants (n = 78)

Only 28 out of 118 reported new or increased assistance in their area since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among them, 22 out of these 28 indicated that the new or increased assistance consisted of food aid. Only 7 of them reported assistance taking place that concerned seeds and other agricultural inputs, considering that July–August is not a key period for agricultural input distribution.

Almost all key informants interviewed reported disruptions in their work as agriculture extension officers. Most of them managed to adapt by still working with farmers, but in smaller groups, or by working through online groups, although not all farmers have access to these technologies. In turn, this has added to the disadvantages already present among the more isolated agricultural households in the midst of the crisis.
Conclusion

Key prospects

- The COVID-19-related crisis has aggravated a pre-existing crisis driven by the deterioration of the economy over the past two years.
- The below-average harvest from the summer crops will lead to an early start of lean season, therefore probably lasting longer than usual and resulting in increasing food insecurity levels over the next six months.
- Planting for the next summer season in November will likely be affected by disruptions in the seed systems and economic access due to higher-than-usual prices and reduced incomes.
- Coping capacities have already been eroded after the poor harvest in 2019 and the ongoing economic crisis.
- The economic crisis is expected to deepen amid a weakening currency on the back of the global pandemic, together with challenges with economic reforms and persistent shortages of food due to successive poor harvests.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has not stabilized and needs to be monitored, as rebounds in transmissions could lead to new restriction measures.
- The risk of floods with respect to La Niña weather pattern over December–January also needs to be monitored.

Recommendations

Crop production

- The possibility to assist with legume seeds for planting in January and February, and the modality of assistance (e.g. vouchers, in-kind assistance) should be explored.
- Post-harvest management (e.g. storage bags) should be considered.
- Pest management efforts need to increase, including with respect to fall armyworm.
- Investing in resilient farming with adaptation to drought and climate extremes through training on good agricultural practices, holistic farming and landscape approach is needed.
- Collaboration between food and agricultural assistance (i.e. complementing food assistance with agricultural inputs and/or training) is advised.

Livestock production

- Pasture improvement with fodder crops seed assistance in January is recommended.
- Animal health assistance (e.g. vaccination and dipping) in prevision of the peak of livestock diseases in January, given that Theileriosis has decreased cattle population since 2018, and peaking in 2019).
Marketing support

• Providing support to informal markets in order to guarantee their functioning with policy and construction of safe market infrastructures is required.

Livelihood support

• A combination of training activities with cash assistance proves timely.
• Continuing work on more structural issues in the mid to longer terms is advisable, including on savings and loans ventures, gender-based approaches such as Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS), support to women farmer groups and cooperatives, etc.
• Economic support is required, such as cash assistance and support in accessing credit.
• The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for extension services is encouraged, coupled with the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure that the more isolated households are not left out and can benefit from in-person assistance.

Monitoring

• Flood preparedness and the identification of potential hotspots until the December–January period is necessary.
• The continuation of the monitoring system established by FAO through phone interviews planned until July 2021, under the framework of a USAID-funded project, will continue, focusing on January–February after the planting of the main crop season, on April for the pre-harvest period and possibly on June–July for the winter season.
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## Annex

Table 6. Unweighted sample size and weighted count of surveyed households, by category of survey respondent and disaggregated at the level used in the analysis of results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total households surveyed</th>
<th>Non-agricultural households</th>
<th>Agriculture households</th>
<th>Crop-producing households</th>
<th>Households responding to crop section (main income)</th>
<th>Livestock-producing households</th>
<th>Households responding to livestock section (main income)</th>
<th>Households responding to agriculture market section</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unweighted</td>
<td>Weighted</td>
<td>Unweighted</td>
<td>Weighted</td>
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<td>189</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1 330</strong></td>
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<td><strong>144</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 181</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 186</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 064</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 113</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: FAO, 2020; FAO assessment results*