The Republic of Madagascar

Increasing severity and prevalence of food insecurity in southern parts of the country

Highlights

- Alarming number of people facing severe acute food insecurity in southern regions.
- Low harvests and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic underpin the current conditions.
- Immediate scaling up and extension of humanitarian response required, including assistance to farming households prior to the start of the next agricultural season.

The southern regions of the country are facing a humanitarian crisis. The prevalence and severity of food insecurity have increased in 2021 in the southern regions of Androy, Anosy and Atsimo Andrefana and conditions are projected to worsen by the end of the year, according to the latest IPC analysis that confirms earlier assessments by GIEWS.

In the post-harvest period between April and September, the number of people facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) is estimated at 1.14 million, about 43 percent of the analyzed population, compared to a rate of 35 percent in the January–March period. This number is projected to increase to 1.31 million (49 percent of the analyzed population) in the October–December 2021 period, 24 percent higher on a yearly basis.

Of particular concern is the increasing number of people in the most severe food insecure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 5 (Catastrophe)</th>
<th>April-September (current situation)</th>
<th>14 000</th>
<th>October-December (projected situation)</th>
<th>28 000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4 (Emergency)</td>
<td>392 000</td>
<td>484 000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 3 (Crisis)</td>
<td>732 000</td>
<td>801 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 2 (Stressed)</td>
<td>996 000</td>
<td>915 000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 1 (Food security)</td>
<td>550 000</td>
<td>464 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (IPC Phase 3 and above)</td>
<td>1 140 000</td>
<td>1 310 000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

resulted in reduced household food supplies and a loss of income-earning opportunities through crop sales. In addition, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that have weighed on the overall economic performance of the country, caused job and incomes losses, particularly from non-farm activities, eroding households’ ability to purchase food during a year when household supplies are unusually low and further diminishing their capacity to remain resilient to the health, economic and weather shocks. The impact of the pandemic triggered a 3 percentage-point increase in the rate of poverty to 77 percent (an additional 1.38 million people) in 2020.

The next agricultural season in southern regions is expected to begin in October 2021 and early weather forecasts indicate a higher-than-normal likelihood of below-average rainfall during the first three months. Given the possibility of a delayed start of the agricultural season that could further aggravate conditions, an extension and immediate scaling up of ongoing food and livelihood assistance are urgently required. In addition, agricultural support should be provided to farming households well in advance of the start of the season to bolster productive capacities and ensure that households are sufficiently equipped to produce this season.
This report was prepared by the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) of the Markets and Trade Division of FAO. The updates focus on developing anomalous conditions aimed at providing early warnings, as well as latest and more elaborate information than other GIEWS regular reports on the food security situation of countries, at both national and sub-national levels. None of the information in this report should be regarded as statements of governmental views.

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