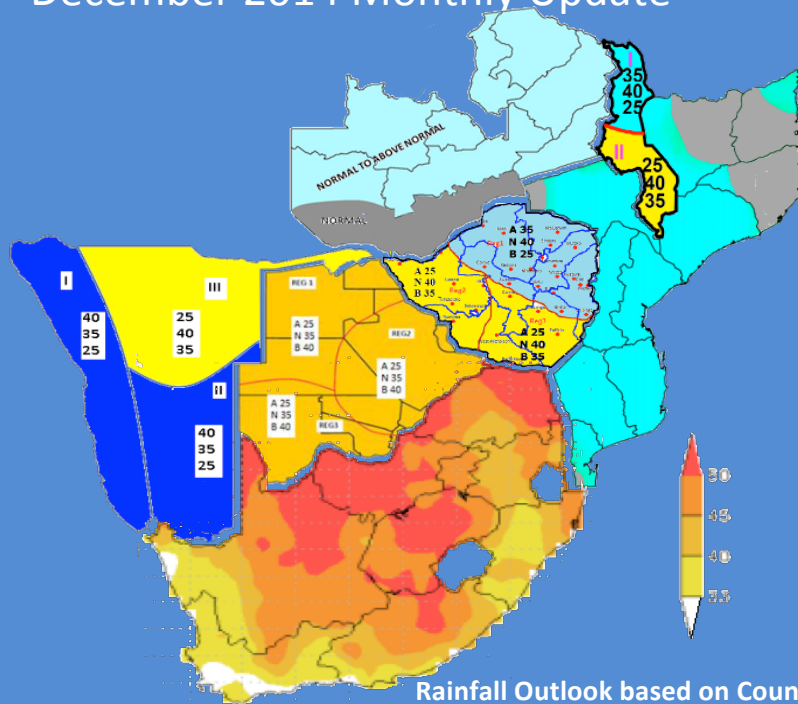


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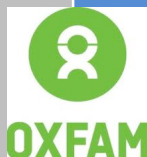
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# Food & Nutrition Security Working Group

December 2014 Monthly Update

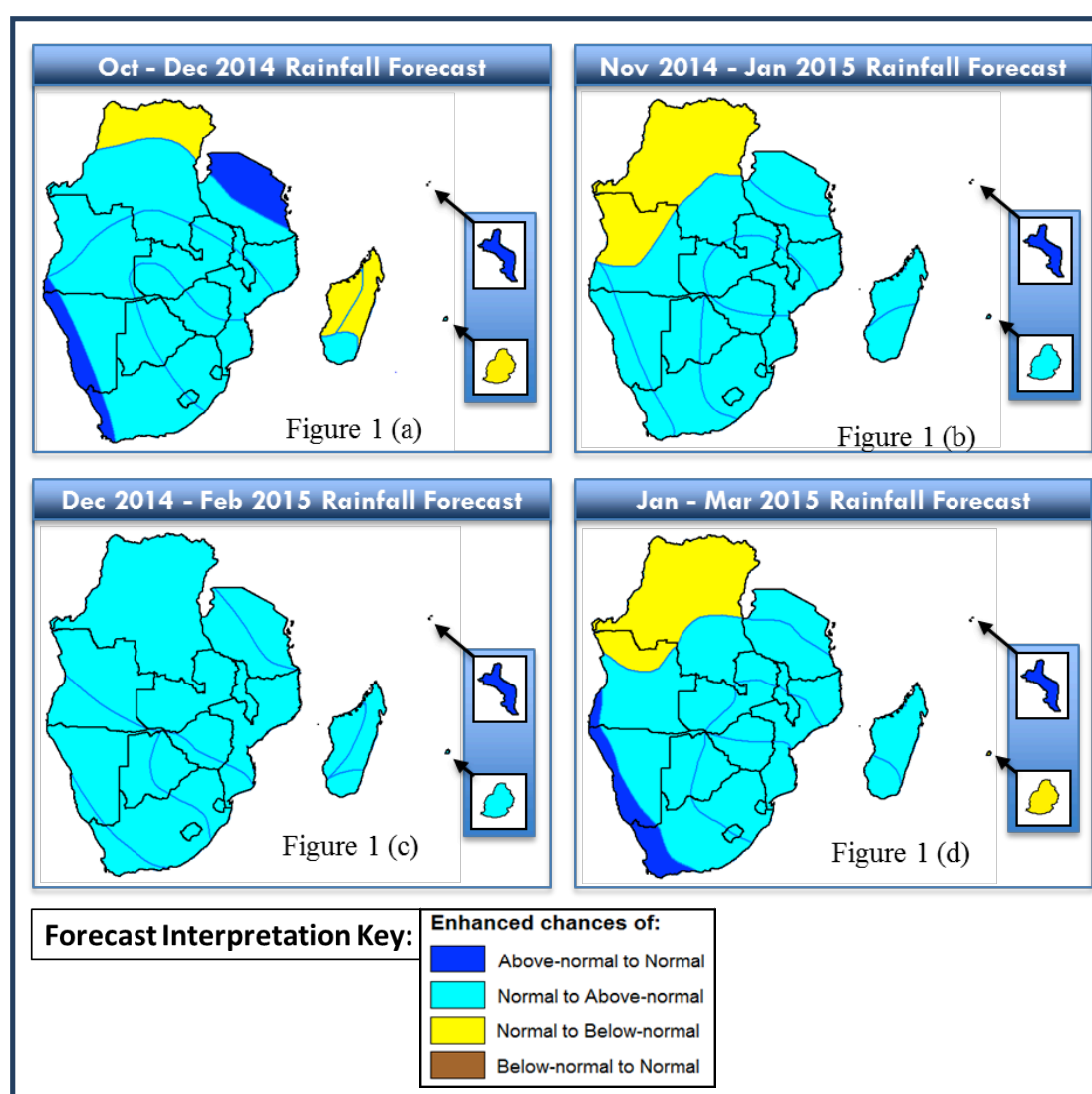


Rainfall Outlook based on Countries' forecast, SARCOF

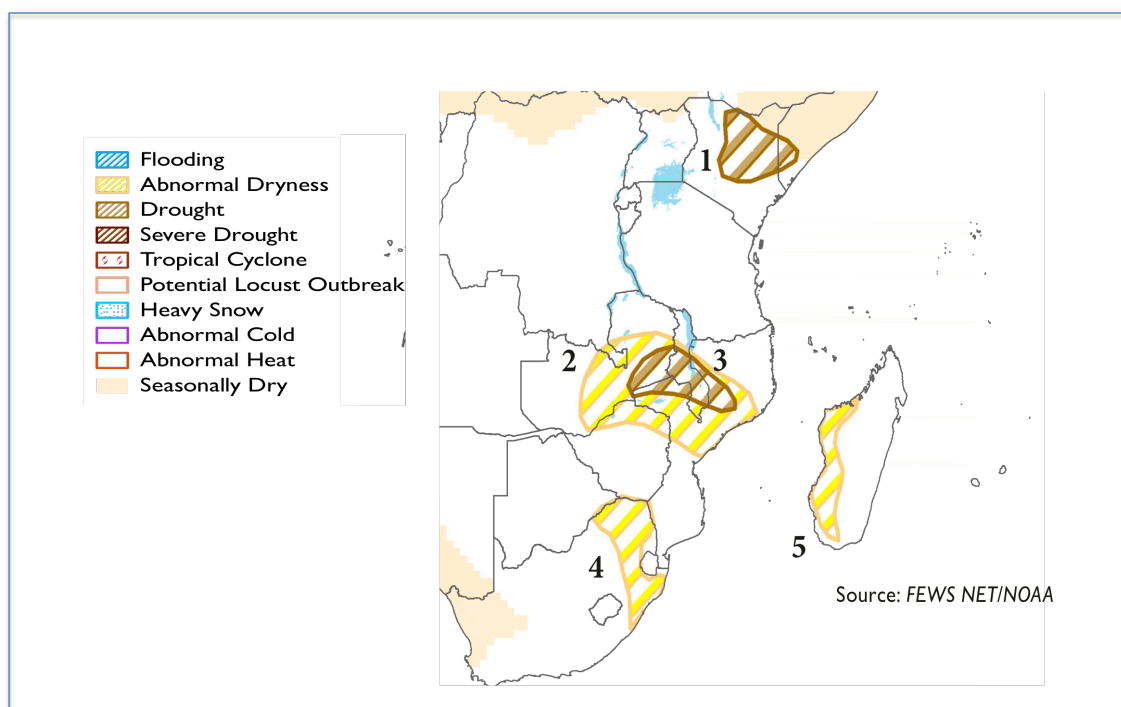


## Regional Update (updated 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2014)

As presented in the SADC RVAA Annual Organisation Meeting (AOM) that took place in early December, the statement from SARCOF Forecast states that normal to above-normal rainfall are expected for most parts of the region, except for western and northern parts of the region and Madagascar. Towards the second half of the season (January to March 2015), there are positive expectations for high rainfall, with above-normal to normal in most areas, excluding north-eastern Tanzania and western Madagascar. Some areas are prone to mid-season dry spells, even where above-normal is forecast.



Rainfall received in November was low in many parts of the region, pointing to a poor start of the season in eastern Zambia, southern Malawi, central Mozambique, northern Zimbabwe and parts of South Africa.



Insufficient rainfall since the beginning of October has led to dryness and delayed planting throughout eastern Zambia, northern Zimbabwe, western and central Mozambique, and southern Malawi. Prolonged dry spells since October have resulted in large rainfall deficits and below-average vegetation conditions over parts of eastern Zambia, Malawi, western and northern Mozambique.

While much of South Africa has received adequate rains since the beginning of the Southern African monsoon, the northernmost and eastern parts of the country have received below-average rains, affecting regional agricultural conditions. Moderate to heavy rains are forecast over the Limpopo province of South Africa during the next week, which should help reduce moisture deficits.

Most rural households across the region will maintain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes between October 2014 and March 2015. However in localized parts of Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, and Tanzania, poor households are projected to face mainly Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and some Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes during this period due to high food prices, along with reduced incomes from labor and crop sales following the 2013/14 seasonal harvest.

Across the region, food prices are expected to be stable and to follow seasonal trends due to increased market supply and reduced demand. Due to above average harvests, households will start depending on the markets a little later than usual. Prices are expected to be lower or similar to their respective five-year averages but will generally be lower than 2013 prices because of above-average production during the 2013/14 agricultural year.

## COUNTRY ANALYSIS

### Angola

Prices of basic foodstuff in Namibe and Cunene markets are beginning to show a slight decreasing trend. The use of less expensive railway for transportation from rural to urban areas is contributing to these unseasonably low food prices. This is expected to improve food access in these areas given that most households rely on markets to access foodstuff during this period.

As the lean season begins in some areas the Ministry of Social Affairs has restarted food distributions to rural households in Namibe and Cunene Provinces. Current acute food insecurity outcomes among the majority of households continues to be Minimal (IPC Phase 1).

Poor households in areas of concern are able to expand their livelihoods. However, it is estimated that around the end of December onwards households in the Southern Livestock, Millet, and Sorghum livelihood zone will likely be Stressed (IPC Phase 2) once they deplete their food stocks and the peak of the lean season begins from January-March 2015.

### Lesotho

Stable food prices, ongoing safety-net and subsidy programs, and the start of green consumption in February to March together with income opportunities associated with agriculture activities, are all expected to limit acute food insecurity to Stress (IPC Phase 2) from December-March.

Seasonal rains have started across the country with planting ongoing and in some places completed. Current rainfall received is above last year across the country. With estimated normal to above normal rains forecasted for the January to March period growth and maturity of crops is expected to enhance prospects of good production.

A combination of ongoing safety nets reaching 339,500 people, agriculture support programs by NGOs and FAO targeting 18,500 households and the ongoing government input subsidy program is expected to improve access food and production costs for targeted households. These programs are expected to meet the livelihood and survival requirements of most of the 447,760 people the LVAC identified as at risk of food insecurity for the 2014/15 consumption year.

### Malawi

Rains have been delayed for more than 30 days in most parts of the southern region and between 10 to 20 days in the central region. This dryness will likely have negative impacts on crop production this season due to a shortened growing season. The late start is also expected to prolong the lean period for households and reduce agriculture labour opportunities, adversely impacting incomes among households that are dependent on markets for food purchases.

Humanitarian assistance to approximately 640,000 people identified as food insecure countrywide is on schedule. As part of the humanitarian assistance programming that is likely to start by the third week of December, an estimated 57 percent are receiving assistance in the form of cash and 43 percent are receiving assistance in-kind. Initially the assistance will be rolled out in the first cohort of districts and between January and February in additional districts.

## Mozambique

The majority of households continue to experience Minimal food insecurity outcomes. Currently, food availability and access remain adequate because households are still relying mostly on food from their own production and their typical livelihood strategies. Overall, the projected food security outcomes will be favorable from January to March.

Prices for maize started to increase seasonably in November, and they continue to be near or below the five-year average and previous year's prices. Stable prices will continue to facilitate staple food access for the majority of poor households.

The month of November is normally when most areas experience significant rains. However, below-normal rains have been observed in most parts of the southern and central regions, delaying planting until early November and affecting vegetation conditions. In the northern region the rains usually do not start until mid-December. Rainfall over the past few days has improved conditions in some areas, but seasonal progress will need to be monitored closely over the next few weeks.

## South Africa

During November 2014, significant rainfall was received over the central and eastern parts of the country. Commercial producers intend to plant 2,600 million ha of maize for 2015, which is 3,3% less than the 2,688 million ha planted last season. Projected closing stocks of maize for the current 2014/15 marketing year are 2,161 million tons, which is considerably more than the previous years' ending stocks.

The projection for the 2014/15 marketing year exports are 655 000 tons for white maize, which represents a decrease of 35, 1 % compared to the 1,009 million tons of the previous marketing year. From 26 April to 28 November 2014, progressive white maize exports amount to 316 800 tons, with the main destinations being the BLNS countries (64, 9% or 205 754 tons) and Zimbabwe (17, 5% or 55 545 tons).

## Zambia

Seasonal rainfall has been slow to start in northern Zambia, despite forecasts of average to above-average total seasonal rainfall by the Zambia Department of Meteorology. The current rainfall pattern is not yet of concern as the optimal timing for planting includes December for most crops.

Acute food insecurity outcomes are expected to remain Minimal (IPC Phase 1) through at least March 2015. This is due to the good 2014 harvest which is expected to result in a milder than usual December-February lean season.

Maize and meal prices remained relatively stable but still above the five-year average despite the good market supply partially due to high marketing costs. Poor households will start to exhaust their stocks later than usual, in December. These households will then increase their market purchases of staple foods at a time when prices are increasing seasonally during the lean season.

## Zimbabwe

The food security situation is stable across the country as most households are still consuming staple food from their own production. Some rural households are supplementing this food with market

purchases, particularly in the traditionally cereal deficit areas in the south and western parts of the country. Minimal (IPC Phase 1) acute food insecurity outcomes are projected from January through March 2015.

Above-average cereal production from the previous agriculture season has resulted in improved market supplies, contributing to below average national staple food prices. Currently maize grain is selling at prices that are 23 percent below last year's levels and 14 percent below the two-year average. In November the northern parts of the country experienced erratic and below-average rains, resulting in abnormal dryness in the extreme northern parts of the country including some cereal surplus producing areas.

## Training Events in 2015

Event	Dates	Venue	Contact Organization
Urban vulnerability Assessment, Training of Trainers	28 January – 12 February	Swaziland (tbc)	SADC RVAA
Nutrition assessment tools & analysis	15- 27 February	Tanzania	SADC RVAA
GIS for Food Security	08-21 March	Namibia	SADC RVAA
Food Security & VAA measuring and monitoring + Market analysis for food security	October	South Africa	SADC RVAA

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The Food Security Update is jointly produced by the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group – Southern Africa. The overall mission of the Group is to contribute to enhanced programming for improved Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods in southern Africa.

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