

Namibia Food & Nutrition Security Monitoring

Bulletin No: 2

NOVEMBER 2014

Food Security Trends & Vulnerability

Highlights

- Normal to above normal rainfall is predicted for the 2014/15 crop growing season. This may result in a good harvest subject to the distribution of the rainfall during the season.
- Communities and households in the monitored regions confirm the presence of food commodities in local and regional markets. The major sources of cereals at the household level are market purchases and own production.
- Current commercial imports of *Mahangu* stands at 2,987 MT - about 52% of the 5,669 MT imported during the last marketing year. Although the marketing year is not yet over, current import levels are lower than same time last year due to improved harvests.
- Maize meal prices have remained relatively stable since May 2014 but are generally higher compared to same period in 2012 and 2013. This is consistent with the average quarterly inflation rates recorded during the same periods (6.8% in 2012, 5.5% in 2013 and 8.6% in 2014).
- Overall, the Food Consumption Scores (FCS) have remained relatively stable, with the largest group of the sampled households (above 60%) confirming acceptable levels of food consumption in May 2014 and in November 2014. Regionally, the FCS depicts an improving situation with an increase in acceptable levels observed in //Karas (73%), Kunene (72%) and Omusati (65%).
- Livestock/maize meal Terms of Trade (ToT) have remained relatively stable in most areas, except for a notable favourable increase in Omaheke.

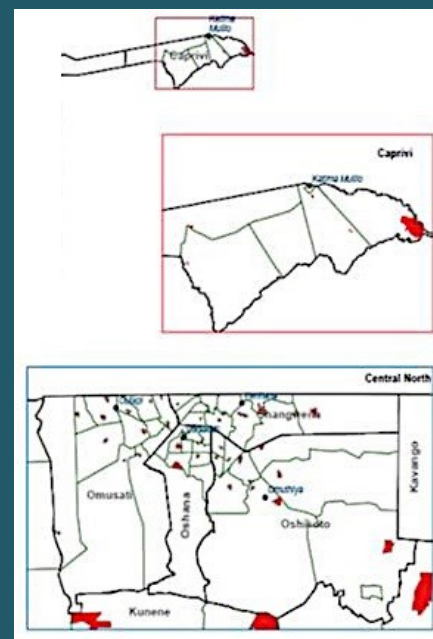
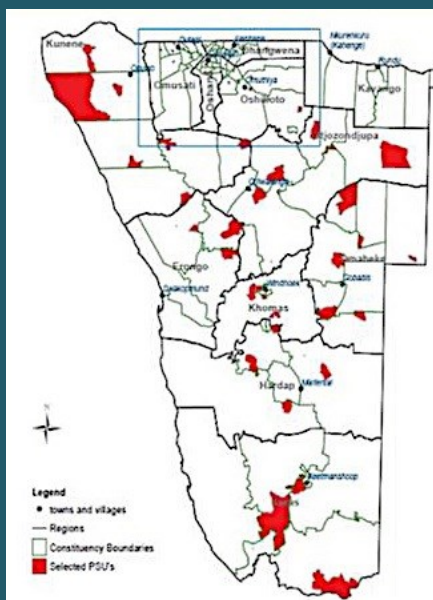
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Food Market - Omusati (Photo/WFP)

FNSM Sentinel Site Maps



Republic of Namibia



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FOOD SECURITY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

FOOD AVAILABILITY:

Food availability can be described as the extent to which food is within the reach of households (i.e. in local shops and markets), both in terms of sufficient quantity and quality. It is also strongly related to the overall availability of food, which is determined by domestic food production, commercial food imports, food aid, road and market infrastructure, the degree of market integration, and local market institutions.

MARKET PRICE INFORMATION:

Market price information provides an indication of household affordability given its income levels. Any food price increases can actually limit access of households to food commodities thereby compromising households' food security.

FOOD ACCESS:

Food access is to a large extent determined by food prices and household resources. Important drivers of food access are household resources, food prices, food preferences and socio-political factors such as discrimination and gender inequality.

HOUSEHOLD FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE:

Household food consumption was measured using the Food Consumption Score (FCS) technique, which is a composite of dietary diversity and food frequency measures. Dietary diversity refers to the number of different foods or food groups consumed, and food frequency refers to the food consumed over a 7-day period.

HOUSEHOLD COPING STRATEGIES:

The coping strategies are proxy indicators for food-access related food security. They can provide insight on how households cope with income and food shortfalls.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASING POWER:

In food security terms, the household purchasing power is a measure of the quantity and quality of food products that a particular household can afford to buy using income available to the household. Purchasing power is analyzed by calculating the terms of trade (ToT) using for example wage rates, food retail prices, livestock prices, etc. ToTs are said to be favorable if the income obtained from the sale of one animal (say cattle) enables the household to buy a sizeable quantity of food, in this case maize meal.

MAIN INCOME SOURCES:

Income sources constitute a food-access indicator that identifies the reliability and sustainability of household income sources and levels of household earnings. Sources of income are thus directly related to the economic activities of household members. Hence, field data on income sources is collected from the sentinel sites to ensure that the basis for sustaining households is accurately reported.

FOOD UTILIZATION:

Food utilization refers to an individual's ability to absorb and metabolize nutrients. Monitoring the impact of disease, care quality, sanitation and the quality and composition of diet on nutritional outcomes is essential for a full understanding of food security.

Water and sanitation are also food utilization indicators. If not properly managed, improper water and sanitation practices can impact an individual's ability to utilize the nutrients appropriately, leading to malnutrition and consequently food insecurity.

FINDINGS

1. HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

About 48% of the sampled households, during the November 2014 Food & Nutrition Security Assessment, were female headed households. Kunene region continue to register the highest proportion of female headed households (62%), followed by Omusati (53%), //Karas (42%) and Omaheke (39%). All members of the sampled households were reported to be in good health. There were no child-headed households found among the sample, and only 30% of the households were elderly headed. 98% of the children had both parents alive, 8% of households had chronically ill persons, while 2% reported the presence of disabled individuals living in their households. All school aged children were said to be enrolled in schools.

2014 -2015 Seasonal Rainfall Outlook

The Rainfall Outlook released by the Namibia Meteorological Services in August 2014 predicts normal to above normal rainfall conditions throughout the growing season (Table 1). All being equal as predicted, this could be a good season for agricultural production. However, this forecast was issued under the back drop of a weak El Niño in the Pacific Ocean. An El Niño year is associated with drier conditions in Southern Africa. Although it is perceived to be a mild El Niño, its overall impact remains unpredictable. Flooding could occur in the areas predicted to receive normal to above normal rains, especially the low lying areas, particularly in the northern central regions. The rainfall performance will continuously be monitored throughout the season.

Table 1: 2014/15 Seasonal Rainfall Forecast	
Oct – Dec'14	Normal to above normal
Nov'14 – Jan'15	Normal to above normal elsewhere Northern Central regions to receive normal to below normal
Dec'14 –Feb'15	Normal to above normal elsewhere Northern Central regions to receive normal to below normal

FINDINGS

2. FOOD AVAILABILITY

Communities in the monitored regions confirmed readily available food commodities in local and regional markets. The major sources of cereals cited by majority of households are market purchases and own production. Food assistance has been cited in //Karas where food distribution continued to utilize the remaining drought response stocks, and in Kunene where drought relief continued due to extended drought conditions.

However, where own production has been mentioned as a major source of food, household food stocks were low and in most cases non-existent. Only Omusati and Zambezi regions confirmed sufficient stocks to last for more than 3 months. In Kunene the absence of stocks at household level is a cause for concern for poor households with limited sources of income and whose coping capacity has been eroded over the years.

The availability of locally produced Mahangu increased this year compared to last year. Table 2 shows Mahangu tonnages (MT) for 2014/15 and 2013/14 marketing years.

Table 2: Mahangu metric tonnages (MT), by marketing year (Source: Namibia Agronomic Board)

Region	2013/14	2014/15
Zambezi	175	534
Omusati	15	14
Ohangwena	46	16
Oshana	43	47
Kavango	35	170
Oshikoto	-	19
Otjozondjupa	-	36
Khomas	119	-

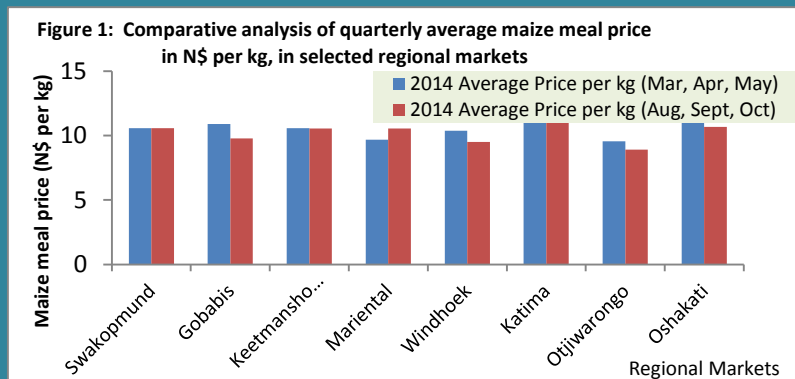
Current commercial imports of Mahangu stands at 2,987 MT, which is about 52% of the total tonnage imported last marketing year (5,669 MT). All Mahangu commercial imports are from India. Although the current marketing year is not yet finished, current import levels are lower than the same time last year due to improved harvests.

2014/15 Agricultural Production Season

Preparations for the 2014/15 agricultural season are at an advanced stage. Acquisition of inputs (seeds, fertilizers and chemicals) are ongoing. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry is conducting the first round of crop assessments for the 2014/15 growing season. The assessment will provide more information on the status of the 2014/15 agricultural production activities.

Market Analysis

A quarterly comparative analysis of average maize meal prices in selected markets indicates relative stability in food prices across the eight regions (Figure 1).



However, an annual quarterly comparative analysis (Figure 2) shows an upward trend in maize meal prices recorded at the same times in 2012 and 2013. This could be linked to international and regional market price increases. The price increases are also consistent with average quarterly inflation rates recorded during the same periods, 6.8 percent in 2012, 5.5 percent in 2013 and 8.6 percent in 2014.

(Source NSA website <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/namibia/inflation-cpi>).

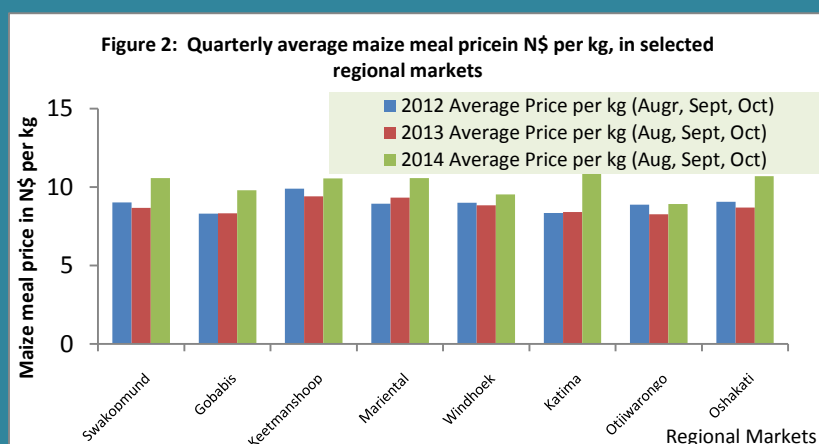
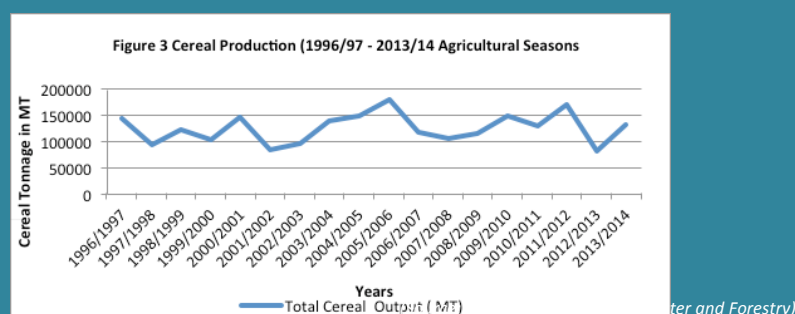


Figure 3 presents a trend analysis of all cereal production from 1996/97 season to 2013/14 season. The 2013/14 Agricultural Season recorded an increase in cereal production compared to the previous season.



Figures 4-9 show monthly price variations with most prices remaining at higher levels compared to 2012 and 2013. An exception is Windhoek and Otiwarongo where maize meal prices have dropped to last year's levels probably due to

Monthly Maize Meal price trends for selected regional markets (Source: NSA)

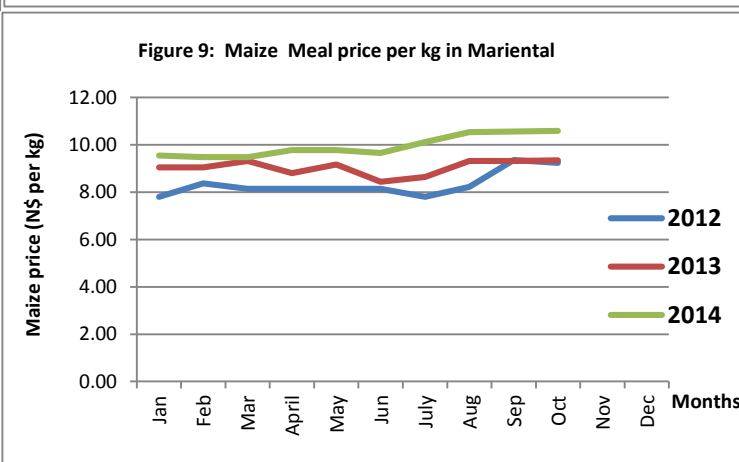
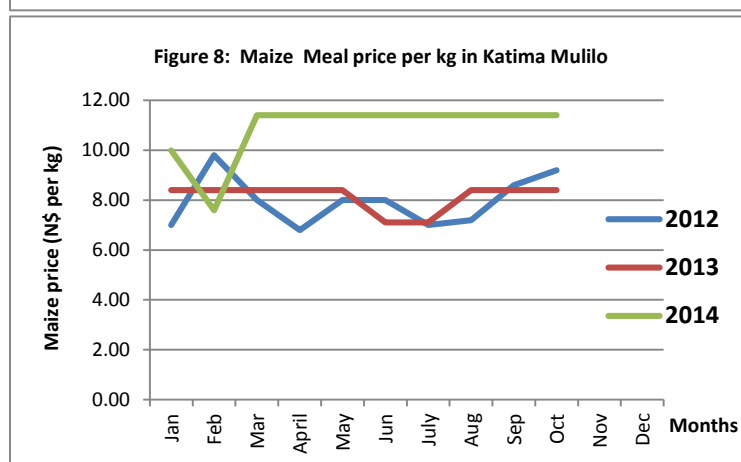
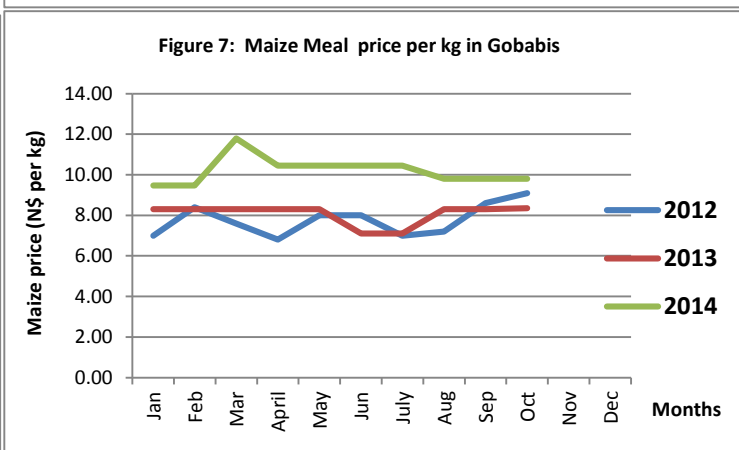
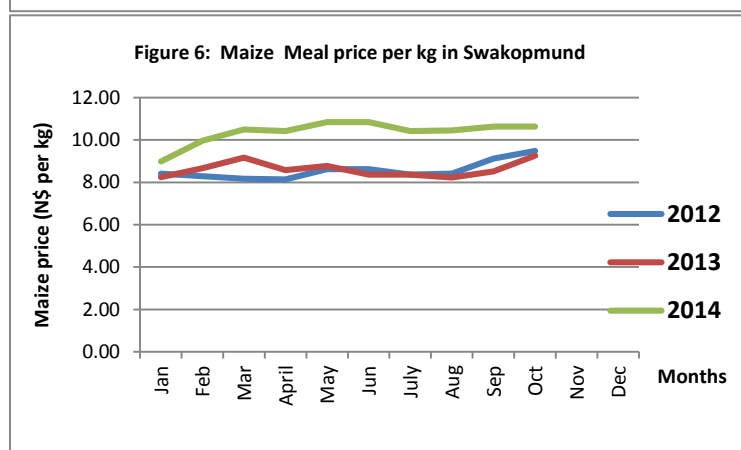
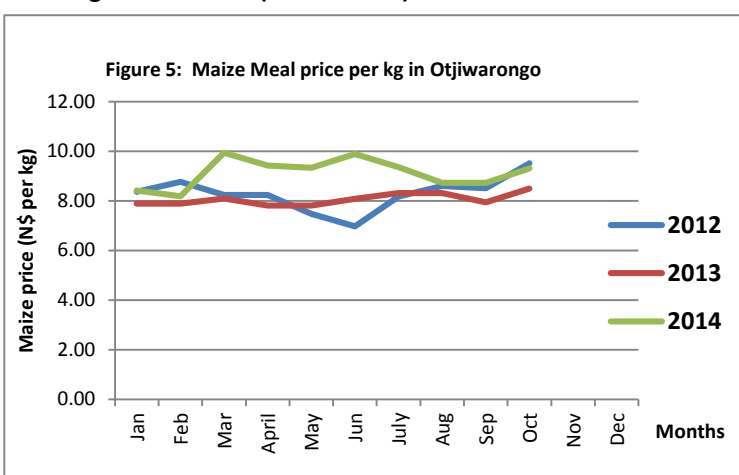
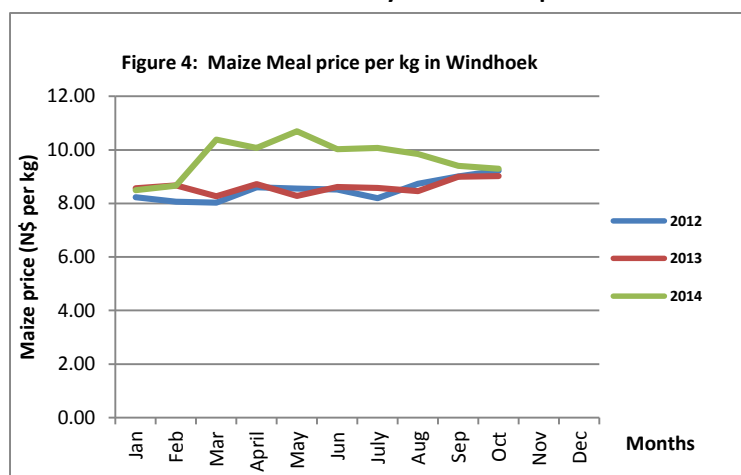


Table 3 shows commodity price data (May 2014 and November 2014) across sentinel sites in Omaheke, one of the livestock-based regions where most households are dependent on market purchases. Significant price drops were observed in Aminius, Okarukambe and Kalahari. Elsewhere commodity prices increased.

Table 3: Comparison of commodity prices across markets(constituencies) in Omaheke region and their respective percentage changes: May 2014 and Novemebr 2014

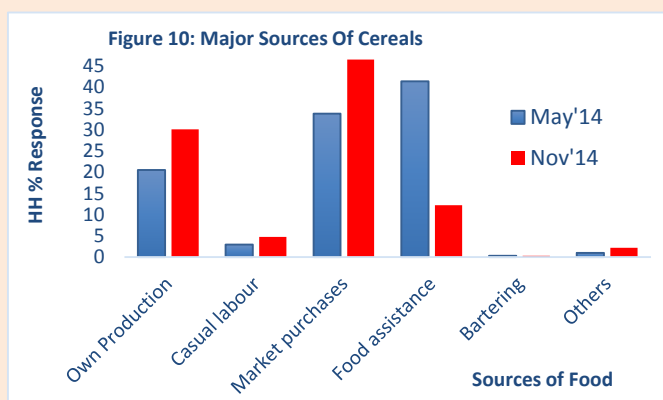
	Epukiro			Gobabis			Kalahari			Aminius			Otjinene			Okorukambe		
	May	Nov	% change	May	Nov	% change	May	Nov	% change	May	Nov	% change	May	Nov	% change	May	Nov	% change
Maize Meal/Kg	6	8	33%	10	6	-40%	10	7	-30%	14	7	-50%	6	8	33%	11	9.45	-14%
Sugar/Kg	13	15	15%	11	24	118%	6	20	233%	14	14	0%	14	16	14%	14	12.47	-11%
Cooking Oil (750)mm	20	20	0%	24	38	58%	18	26	44%	20	17	-15%	19	20	5%	15	18	20%
Rice/Kg	15	25	67%	21			20	8	-60%	27	14	-48%	19	18	-5%	25	24.4	-2%
Fish\Kg	15	20	33%	45			46			40	17	-58%	20			53		

FINDINGS

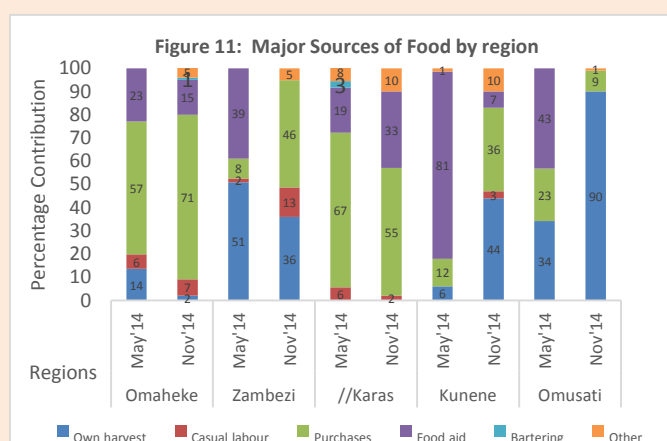
3. FOOD ACCESS

Food Stocks and Sources

Due to improved harvests realized last season, the percentage of households confirming own harvest as a major source of food rose from 20% in May 2014 to 30% in November 2014, an overall 50% increase. Market purchases also increased by 38% while casual labour and bartering increased by 21% each. Households citing food assistance as a major source of food declined by 66% compared to the previous assessment. This indicates a reduced reliance on humanitarian food assistance. Figure 10 shows the contributions of the various sources of cereals across the monitored regions compared to the previous May 2014 assessment..



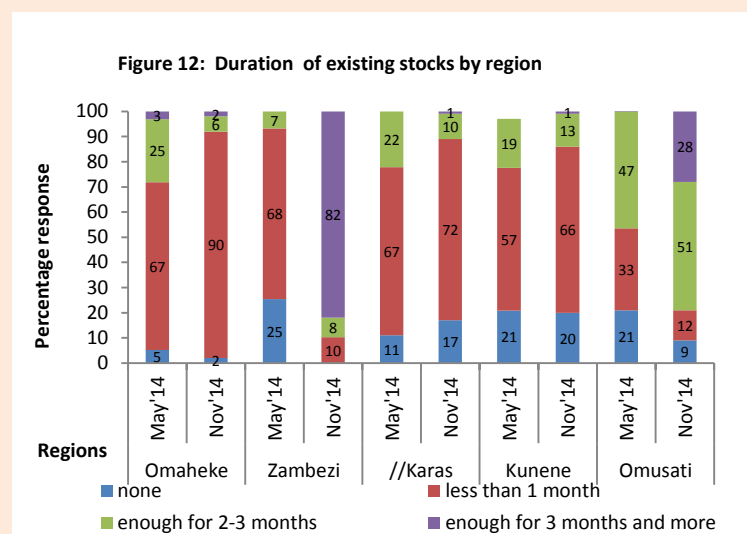
A breakdown analysis of the food sources by region (Figure 11) shows a significant shift from food assistance to own produce and market purchases across all the regions. For example, the majority of households in Omusati confirmed having access to food from own produce.



In //Karas, Omaheke and Zambezi the majority of households obtained most of their food through market purchases, which is normal for these regions since their livelihoods are livestock based.

The majority of households across the monitored regions indicated that their current cereal stocks would last them less than one month – an indication of a greater reliance on market purchases and non existence of food stocks at

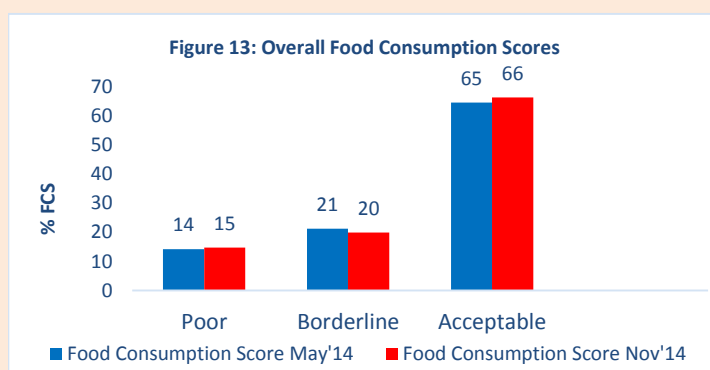
household level (Figure 12).



An exception is Zambezi and Omusati, where the majority of households confirmed stocks to last more than 3 months, which is a positive contribution from last year's improved harvests. At the time of the assessments, households in Kunene confirmed consumption of food from own harvest, however, the harvest was very low and only lasted less than 1 month. This indicates an absence of food stocks at the household level and a greater dependency on market purchases. This calls for scaling up of interventions that increase households purchasing power as a means of improving household food security since the majority of the households rely on market purchases.

Household Food Consumption Patterns

Different foods and food groups were weighted based on their nutritional density. Households were then classified as having either "Poor", "Borderline", or "Acceptable" consumption based on the set cut-off points.



Classification of Food Consumption Scores

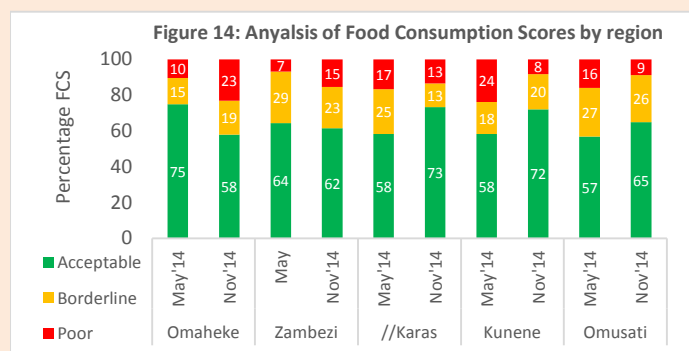
"Poor" food consumption is generally regarded as a sign of extreme household food insecurity. It refers to a diet composed mainly of cereals on a daily basis and vegetables for a maximum of 4 days per week. (FCS: 0.5 to 21.0: Poor)

"Borderline" food consumption is classified as a diet made up of cereals and vegetables on a daily basis plus oils/fats for 5 days and sugar/sugar products for 3 days per week (FCS: 21.0 – 34.5: Medium)

"Acceptable" food consumption is classified as daily intake of cereals, vegetables, oil and sugar, and at least one day consumption of foods rich in protein (FCS: 35 and above: Acceptable)

Overall, the Food Consumption Scores (FCS) have remained relatively stable with the largest group of the sampled households (above 65%) confirming acceptable levels of food consumption for both May and November 2014 assessments (Figure 13).

Regional analysis of the FCS depicts an improving situation with an increase in acceptable food consumption levels observed in //Karas, Kunene and Omusati (Figure 14). However, a notable decrease in FCS was observed in Omaheke from 75% to 58%, a situation that requires further monitoring and follow up.

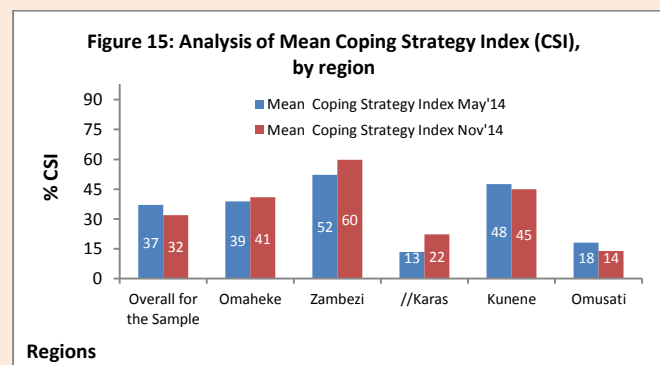


Available statistics show that 69% of the female headed households had acceptable food consumption levels – 4% more than the male headed household.

Household Coping Strategies

Coping strategies are analyzed using the Coping Strategy Index (CSI) – a technique which measures the frequency and severity of a number of common household coping strategies for addressing shortfalls in food supply and combines the information into a single CSI score. With the CSI, a lower score implies reduced stress on the household's ability to meet its food needs and thus relatively better food security for the households.

Overall, the mean Coping Strategy Index (CSI) for the sampled households declined 5% points from 37% in May to 32% in November 2014. Kunene and Omusati also registered declining CSI values attributable to improved food security conditions. The decline could be linked to improved food & nutrition security conditions resulting from a better harvest (Figure 15). However Omaheke and //Karas are registering an increase in their mean CSI values – a situation that needs further investigation since the increase in CSI values is not further supported by any other indicator being monitored. High CSI values imply emerging food insecurity concerns/issues.



The most common coping strategies employed by the households (HHs) during the quarter were:

1. Reduction of number of meals eaten per day, 72% of HHs
2. Limiting portion size of food, 65% of HHs.
3. Reliance on less expensive or less preferred foods, 51% of HHs.
4. Borrow food or rely on friends, 47% of HHs.
5. Reduce adult consumption in favour of children, 47% of HHs.
6. Rely on casual labour, 32% of HHs.

A comparative analysis of the most common coping strategies for both round of assessments are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Most Common Coping Strategies of the Quarter	
May 2014 Quarter	November 2014 Quarter
Reduce Number of meals	Reduce Number of meals
HH sharing of food	Limit portion size
Distress sale of livestock	Rely on less expensive foods
Rural to urban migration	Borrow food or rely on friends
Rely on less preferred foods	Reduce adult consumption

Household Purchasing Power

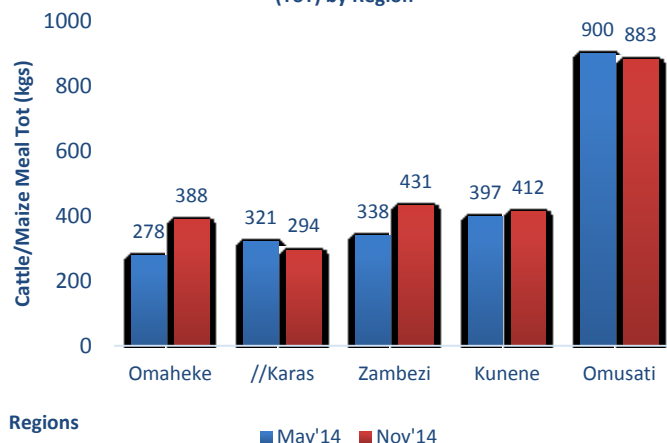
The purchasing power of sampled households in this analysis was measured using average maize and livestock prices in order to assess terms of trade (ToT). Using the commodity prices recorded at the sentinel sites, an average price for each commodity and livestock type was calculated for each region monitored. The income from the livestock sales was then used to determine the quantity (in Kgs) of maize meal that could be bought at the prevailing market maize meal prices (Table 5).

Livestock/Maize meal Terms of trade have remained relatively stable in most areas except for a notable favorable increase in Omaheke. A significant Pig/Maize meal ToT has been registered in most regions – indicative of poor market value of pigs.

Table 5: Number of kgs of maize meal that can be purchased by selling one animal										
	Omaheke		//Kharas		Zambezi		Kunene		Omusati	
	May'14	Nov'14	May'14	Nov'14	May'14	Nov'14	May'14	Nov'14	May'14	Nov'14
Cattle ToT	278	388	321	294	338	431	397	412	900	883
Goat ToT	48	79	45	52	50	49	71	93	108	117
Sheep Tot	35	61	44	43	0	0	58	59	128	167
Pig Tot	69	10	0	0	82	0	67	12	102	167
Chicken Tot	6	6	5	3	6	8	7	4	9	11



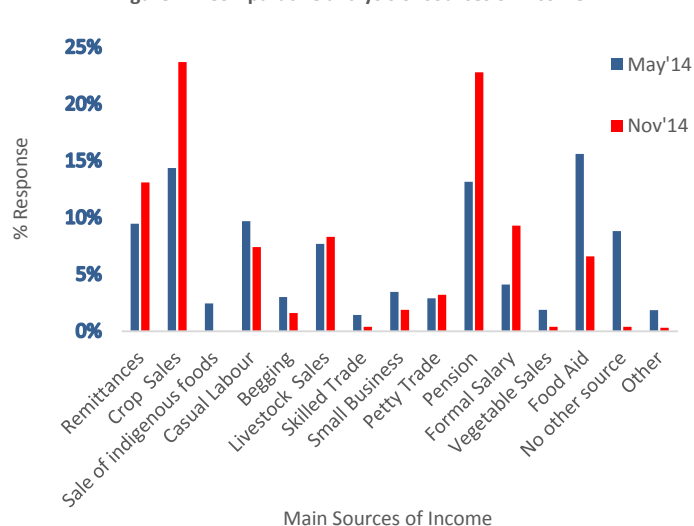
Figure 16: Comparison of Cattle/Maize meal Terms of trade (ToT) by Region



Main Income Sources

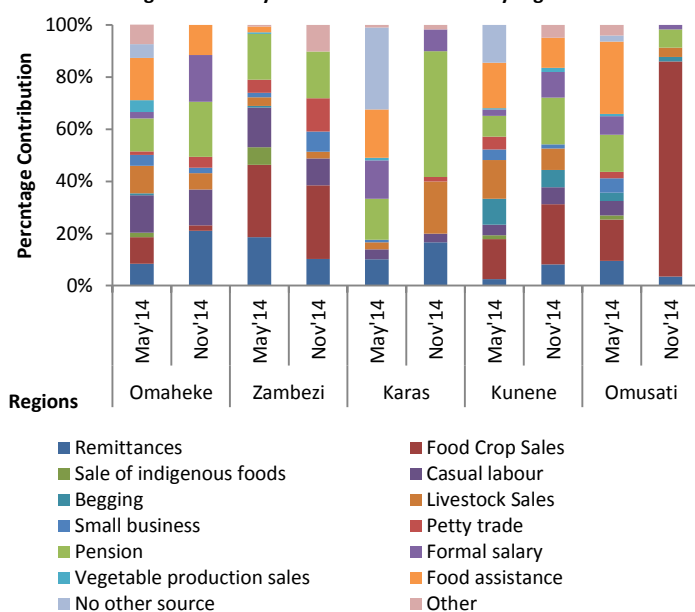
The sources of income for the majority of the sampled households continue to diversify (Figure 17). Diversification of sources of income is good in order to spread the risk during a negative shock, therefore, not all sources will be susceptible to one single shock. Pension, remittances and crop and livestock sales featured dominantly as the main sources of income. The number of households accessing income from pension in November doubled compared to that found in May – a good indicator of the expanded coverage of this safety net programme. Crop and livestock sales have also improved due to improved harvests and grazing /pastures.

Figure 17: Comparative analysis of sources of Income



An analysis of the sources of income by region (Figure 18) depicts a diverse situation across the regions. In Omusati the highest number of respondents switched from food assistance (May'14) to food crop sales (Nov'14) – the main contributor being the good harvests realized last year. A significant shift has also been observed in //Karas from no other income source (32%) to pension (48%). Livestock sales have increased significantly in //Karas most probably due to attractive prices in the neighbouring South African markets. Food crop sales and pension were cited as major income sources by most households in Zambezi.

Figure 18: Analysis of Sources of Income by region



Livestock Ownership

Livestock ownership (cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and poultry) in sampled households remains relatively high at above 80%. Even at the regional level, the statistics for livestock ownership remain high in May and November 2014, confirming widespread ownership of livestock by the majority of rural households (Table 6).

Table 6: Livestock Ownership by Region

	Omaheke	Zambezi	//Kharas	Kunene	Omusati
May'14	75	86	81	88	98
Nov'14	72	80	85	79	98

An almost equal number of male and female headed households own livestock as confirmed by the statistics during the May 2014 and November 2014 assessments (Table 7). However, there has been a decline in the number of female headed households confirming livestock ownership during November 2014.

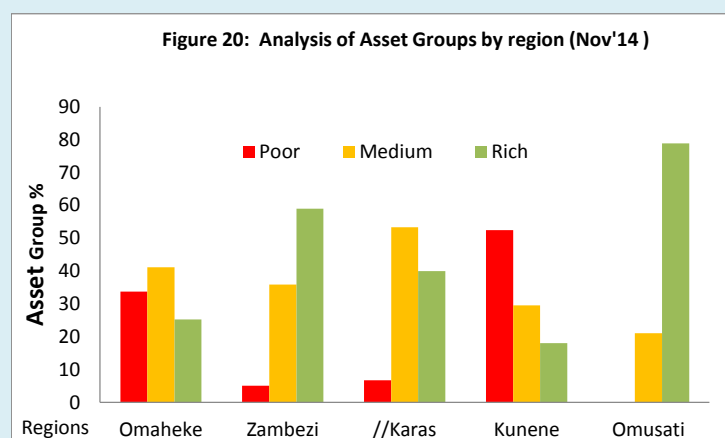
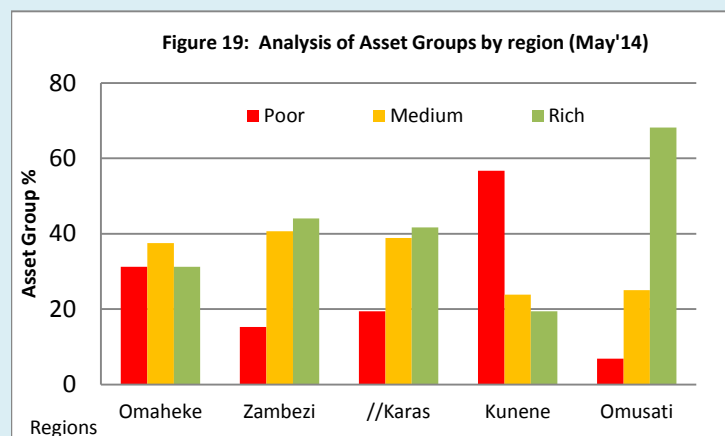
Table 7: Livestock Ownership by Gender

	Male	Female
May '14	85%	83%
Nov '14	86%	75%

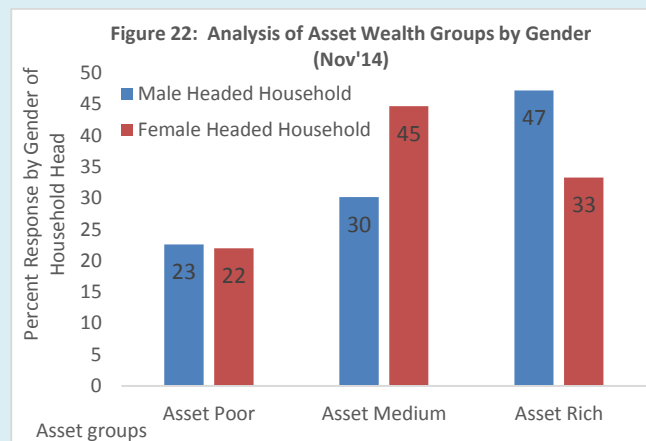
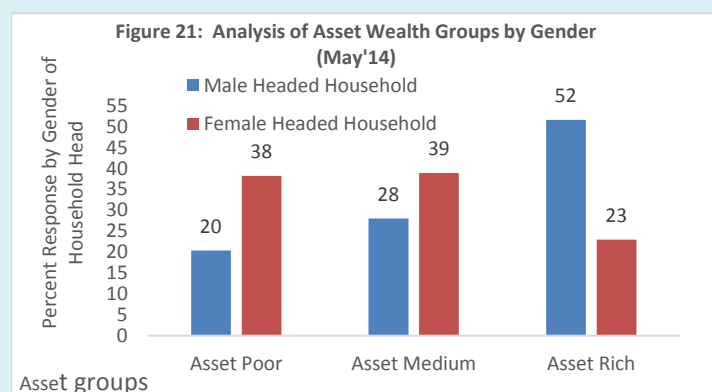
Data on asset ownership was collected from each household on a total of 21 different assets (both productive and non-productive). The data was analyzed considering the number of assets owned by households. Households were then classified as asset poor (having 0-4 different asset types), asset medium (5-9 assets) or asset rich (with 10 or more assets).

A) Asset Ownership

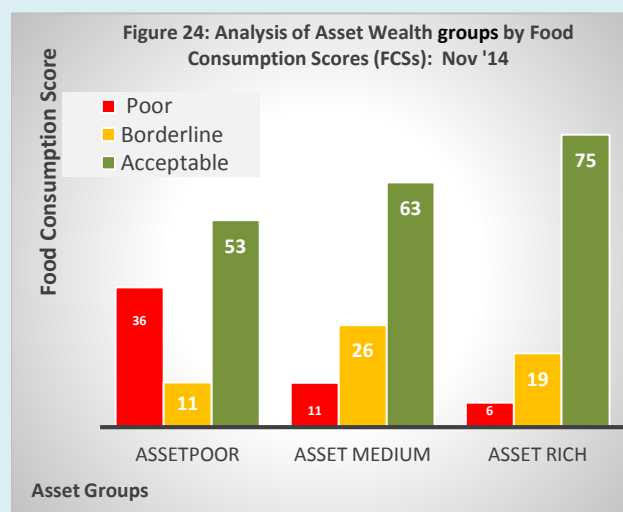
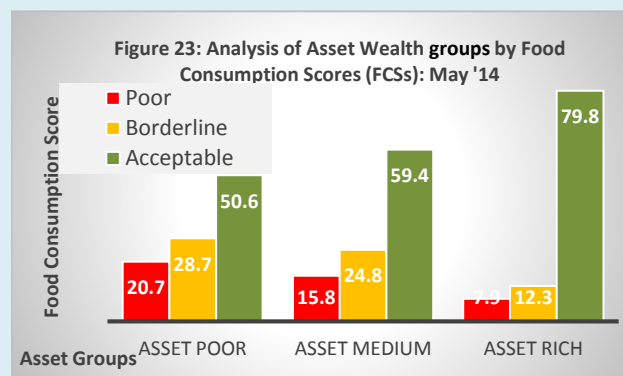
The region-based analysis for the November 2014 assessment continues to depict Omusati as one of the regions with asset-rich households (78%). Kunene has the lowest percentage of asset-rich households at 21% (Figure 19 and 20). This situation could be linked to high poverty levels in the region.



A comparative analysis of the asset groups by gender of the household head and by region for both the May and November assessments is presented in Figure 21 and 22. In both assessments, the gender based analysis reveals that the majority of the sampled male-headed households are assets rich compared to female-headed households. The underlying causes for these gender based socio-economic disparities need further probe/investigation.



An analysis of asset wealth groups versus food consumption scores indicates that the wealthier the households in terms of assets the higher the food consumption score (Figure 23 and 24). Consistent with the May 2014 statistics, households sampled in November 2014 depicted high percentages of acceptable food consumptions in the asset rich group (75%), asset medium (63%) and asset poor group (53%). The high scores of poor to borderline among the asset poor and asset medium wealth group's points to significant levels of food insecurity among these groups. The possible consequence of having poor to borderline food consumption is developing malnutrition especially among children under five years.



FINDINGS

4. FOOD UTILIZATION

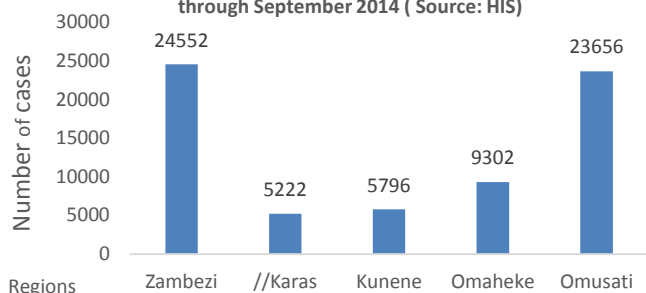
Nutrition

According to the preliminary findings of the 2013 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) released in October 2014, moderate and severe stunting among children under five years dropped by 22% and 21%, respectively, compared to the 2006 DHS survey results. Moderate wasting also dropped by 21%, while severe wasting registered a 5% increase. The drop in the malnutrition rates signify an improvement in the nutrition status of children under five years. This could be an indication of positive impact of the policies and nutrition interventions.

Diseases

Zambezi and Omusati regions (Figure 25) recorded the highest number of cases of diarrhea from May to September 2014. This could be linked to poor hygienic practices in preparing food and lack of access to clean drinking water.

Figure 25: Total number of diarrhea cases per region: May through September 2014 (Source: HIS)



Water and Sanitation

There is an increase in the number of communities that confirmed access to safe drinking water (boreholes) from 29% in May 2014 to 56% in November 2014. The number of communities confirming access to piped water remains unchanged at 24%. However, communities that use the bush for sanitation rose significantly from 48% in May to 70% in November – a situation that needs further investigation.

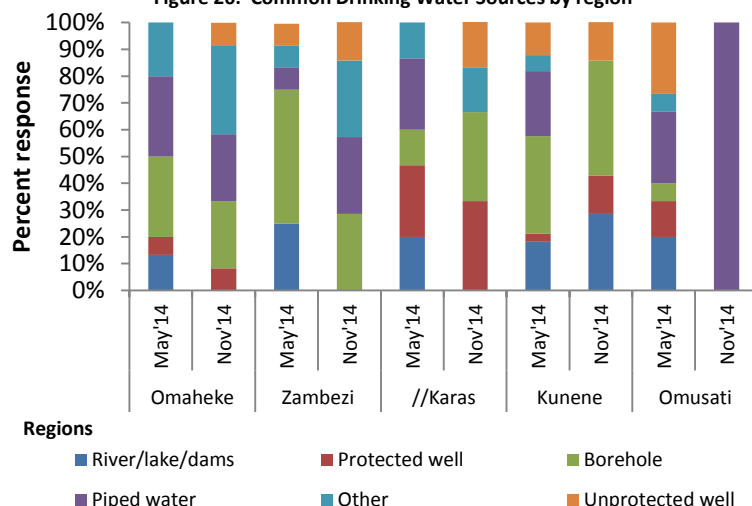
According to WHO: Moderate malnutrition is defined as a weight-for-age between -3 and -2 z-scores below the median of the WHO child growth standards. It can be due to a low weight-for-height (wasting) or a low height-for-age (stunting) or to a combination of both. Similarly, moderate wasting and stunting are defined as a weight-for-height and height-for-age, respectively, between -3 and -2 z-scores.

Severe acute malnutrition is defined by a very low weight for height (below -3z scores of the median WHO growth standards), by visible severe wasting, or by the presence of nutritional oedema.

Sources of drinking water by region

In //Karas and Kunene the percentage of communities that confirmed use of borehole water rose significantly up to 33% and 43% in November from 13% and 36% in May 2014 respectively – an indication of improved access to clean water. In Zambezi, the communities that confirmed use of piped water increased from 8% in May 2014 to 29% in November 2014 – an improvement in access to clean water. The community interviewed in Omusati confirmed total use of piped water. Figure 26 summarises the community responses by region.

Figure 26: Common Drinking Water Sources by region



Sanitation by region

There is an improvement in the use of proper sanitation facilities (improved pit latrine and flush toilets) in Omaheke and //Karas (Figure 27). Data from Omaheke indicates an increase in the use of ventilated improved pit (VIP) toilets by two-folds from 10% recorded in May to 25% in November 2014. In //Karas, communities using the bush for sanitation dropped from 53% in May to 17% in November 2014 – a possible indication of improved access to good sanitation. However, in Kunene, the communities interviewed this time around confirmed widespread use of the bush – a situation that needs to be further investigated. In Omusati the percentage of communities/households using pit latrines and the bush remains unchanged. The percentage of communities that confirmed use of bush/no facility remains high in Zambezi – a call for further investigation.

Figure 27: Sanitary facilities commonly used by region

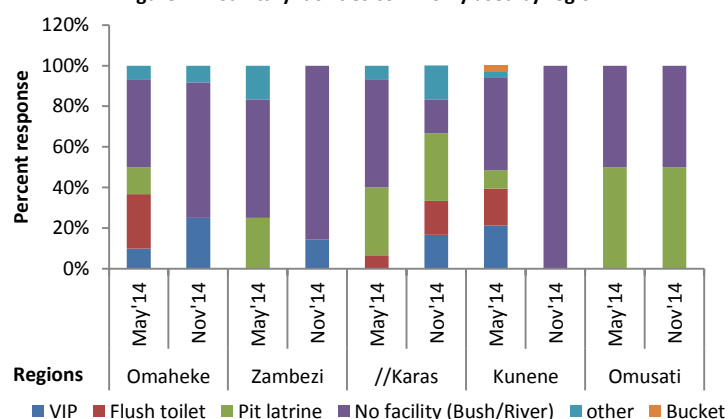
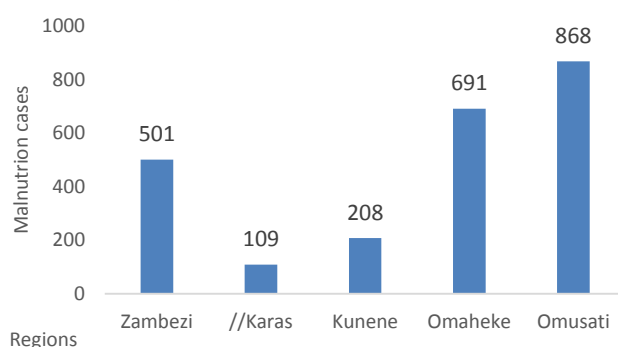


Figure 28: total Number of Malnutrition cases per region
May through September 2014 (Source: HIS)



Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurements at community level are not taken routinely, but is being measured twice a year during the African Vaccination Week and the Mother and Child health days. During the African Vaccination week in May 2014, a total of 74,782 children under 5 years had MUAC measurements take. A total of 1,154 and 216 were found with moderate acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition respectively. These children were referred to the nearest health facility for further assessment and treatment. A total of 196,839 children received Vitamin A supplementation to boost their nutritional status and some 157,985 children under the age of 5 years were dewormed. Deworming is an important nutrition intervention strategy that can help to improve nutritional health status in children.

6. FOOD SECURITY OUTLOOK

- Due to improved harvests realised this past season, food security conditions of sampled households are likely to remain stable until the peak of the hunger period (December to March) when current stocks are expected to be depleted. However, in areas such as Kunene, where physical household stocks are non-existent and the majority of people rely on market purchases, targeted food assistance should continue for the poor households. The CSI values for Kunene remain high indicating existing food & nutrition insecurity. However, CSI values in both Omaheke and //Karas are beginning to rise, which could be an indication of emerging food & nutrition insecurity that needs close monitoring. In all areas, food access is likely to pose a major challenge for the market dependent households due to rising food prices and low purchasing power.
- Although livestock/maize meal ToT has significantly improved across the monitored regions due to improved body conditions of animals, market prices need regular surveillance to ensure protection of livelihoods for communities that are dependent on livestock sales as a main source of income.
- The normal to above normal rainfall forecast is likely to improve harvests prospects for the upcoming season, subject to in-season rainfall performance. Current predictions for the emerging El Niño weather phenomenon are that it will be mild. However, its overall impact remains unpredictable.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is need to continue with the targeted response in Kunene until the next harvest, since the region has been hit by 3 consecutive droughts. Household coping capacity has been overstretched. The poor households continue to engage in distress coping strategies, hence the persistent high CSI values for the region. Furthermore, households confirmed depletion of food stocks at household level.
- There is need to continue monitoring the rainfall season performance given the background of a weak El Niño in the Pacific Ocean. Although it is perceived to be a mild El Niño, its overall impact remains unpredictable. Flooding needs to be closely monitored for the areas predicted to receive normal to above normal rains, especially the low lying areas in the Northern Central regions
- There is also need to expedite the expansion of the food and nutrition security monitoring assessments to all regions in order to generate countrywide food security information.
- For drought prone areas such as Kunene, there is need for long term developmental interventions such as construction of dams and other water harvesting facilities in order to promote irrigation/green schemes. Such projects will ensure resilience strengthening as long-term solutions to vulnerabilities to shocks/droughts.
- There is need to scale up interventions that increase households purchasing power as a means of improving household food security since the majority of the households are now reliant on market purchases.



Background information on the Namibia Food & Nutrition Monitoring System (NFMNS)

Food and Nutrition Security monitoring is a tool that is used to detect and track changes in people's food security and nutrition situations over time and space. It can also be used for early warning in order to alert the government and its partners when a situation deteriorates in order to ensure that assistance can be provided in a timely and appropriate manner. Food and nutrition security monitoring information, in many instances, trigger early responses averting disastrous outcomes while at the same time fulfilling the needs of programmes that aim at building resilience of the affected communities.

The food & nutrition security monitoring system is being establishment under the auspices of Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NAMVAC) in DDRM in the Office of the Prime Minister and is in line with its (NamVAC's) long term strategic plan to strengthen its food security monitoring component (NAMVAC Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017, National Disaster ACT). This is further supported by the 2013 Cabinet Decision No # 7th /07.05.13/001 which was established following the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) recommendation in 2013.

This information is currently being collected in 6 regions (Kunene, Omaheke, Omusati, //Karas, Zambezi and Ohangwena) and the monitoring will be expanded to cover other regions with time depending on the availability of resources.

Data is collected using the sampling framework designed by the National Statistics Agency in order to align the findings to those of other national surveys and NamVAC annual assessments. A stratified two stage cluster sample design was used based on the 2011 Census enumeration areas. A total of 100 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs)/sentinel sites were randomly selected from 71 rural constituencies. A total of 15 households were interviewed per each site bringing the total household sample size to 302 households. A total of 20 community interviews were administered across the monitored regions.

Only data relevant to the food and nutrition security indicators listed below were collected:

- Food Availability (agricultural production, market supplies, food prices, etc.)
- Access (market commodity and livestock prices; food and income sources, Food consumption patterns, coping strategies, etc.)
- Food Utilization: (malnutrition cases, diseases outbreaks, water and sanitation etc.).

The Namibia Food & Nutrition Security Monitoring System is an integral part of the Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NamVAC), which is housed in the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM), in the Office of the Prime Minister. NamVAC is a multi-stakeholder platform that coordinates annual food security and vulnerability assessments- providing a holistic and an integrated analysis on food availability, food access and food utilization within the country. A multi-sectoral task team was composed in 2013 to spear head and oversee the implementation of the food security monitoring activities. The task team comprises of the following institutions:

- DDRM in the Office of the Prime Minister
- Ministry of Agriculture, Water and forestry
- Ministry of Health and Social services
- Namibia Agronomic Board
- National Statistics Agency
- World Food Programme

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