Southern Africa Regional Food Security Update: MALAWI
Updated – January 2014

Highlights

- The first round crop estimates from Ministry of Agriculture indicates prospects for a better harvest this year compared to last year and the overall rainfall so far has been good.
- With the availability of maize in ADMARC markets and local markets, combined with the ongoing humanitarian assistance, prices are expected to decline in February 2014.
- In January 2014, the national average maize price was MK147.21/kg compared to MK89.39/kg same time last year, showing an increase of 65 percent.

Agriculture Situation

- The first round crop estimates from Ministry of Agriculture indicates prospects for a better harvest this year compared to last year.
- So far, the overall rainfall has been good.
- However, this is highly dependent on a continued conducive rainy season, with good and evenly distributed rainfall, and no dry spells at critical periods in the growing season.

Food Availability

- Most of the ADMARC markets across the country have maize, with regular supplies.
- Maize in local markets is also available, and traders have started releasing more maize in the markets across the country.
- With the availability of maize in ADMARC markets and local markets, combined with the ongoing humanitarian assistance, prices are expected to decline in February 2014.

Food Access/Prices

- The inflation rate in the country increased by 0.6 percent points compared to the month before and is currently standing at 23.5 percent. The urban and rural rates stand at 32.5 and 20.0 percent respectively.
- In January 2014, the national average maize price was MK147.21/kg compared to MK89.39/kg same time last year, showing an increase of 65 percent. Compared to last month, the prices have increased by 15 percent, up from MK128.37/kg.
- This month, the highest maize prices were found in Chiradzulu at MK181/kg, while the lowest prices were found in Misuku at MK103.14/kg.

Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization

- CIFF - a stunting prevention project - started distributions in all 27 Health Centres and Extended Delivery Points (EDP) in Ntchisi District by end-January. A total of 10,622 beneficiaries received nutributter out of 13,303 planned (close to 80% coverage). As this was the first distribution, the beneficiary numbers are expected to increase during the next distribution cycle.
- With funding from Norway, Ireland and UK aid, WFP’s supplementary feeding programme has scaled-up to cover nearly 100% of health centres in the 21 of the 24 affected districts and is able to cope with increased admissions of malnutrition of 30% since the lean season started in October.
- During the lean season to date, nearly 40,000 moderately malnourished children and pregnant or lactating mothers in over 480 health centres have received WFP supplementary feeding for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, complementing the provision of therapeutic foods — all supporting the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme in Malawi.

Comments

- Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) conducted a food security monitoring exercise last week of January in 27 districts.
- The report is expected to be finalized by mid-February.