MADAGASCAR

Food insecurity remains high

KEY MESSAGES:

High levels of negative coping persist in the southern regions of Anosy and Androy and in the central region of Atsinanana. Rural areas are still more vulnerable than the capital region.

Staple food prices remain mostly high in the surveyed regions.

Households headed by women are more food insecure than those headed by men.

SEASONAL UPDATE

Parts of southern Madagascar are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) because of the failure of the main season crops in the districts of Amboasary, Ambovombe, Tsihombe and Beloha (source: FEWS NET). The rainfall deficit during the 2015/2016 crop season in drought-affected southern regions ranged from 25 to 70 percent.

The poor harvest comes after three consecutive years of reduced crop production and high food prices in the south, which have weakened households’ ability to cope and have increased food insecurity (source: FAO GIEWS). While the estimated cereal crop losses (mainly for maize) in the drought-affected south are less than 10 percent of the national cereal production. However, the surplus from other regions hardly reaches the southern deficit areas. The available resources of WFP and other stakeholders responding to the drought barely reach half of the severely affected people.

The forecast for rice production from the upcoming harvest is more promising, with production set to reach near-average levels (source: FAO GIEWS).
In the south (Androy and Anosy) and the centre (Atsinanana), the reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) remains high, with no significant change from the previous round. Households in these regions reported significantly higher levels of negative coping than households in the capital region of Analamanga (figure 1).

Households are using high levels of negative coping strategies, including the most severe coping strategy of restricting adult consumption so children can eat. As indicated by the overall rCSI, households in the capital region used fewer coping strategies (figure 2).
The average June prices of both imported and local rice remained stable but high. While there were no significant changes in June maize prices across districts, maize in Androy (1400 MGA/kg) was more expensive than in Anosy (1240 MGA/kg) (figure 4).

The price of local rice in Analamanga and Atsinanana (1400 MGA/kg) was 8 percent higher than the national average in June 2014, but was slightly below the four-year (2011-2014) national average. The price of imported rice in Atsinanana was 3 percent lower than the national average in June 2014, and 13 percent lower than the four-year national average (source: FAO GIEWS).

Households led by women (mean rCSI = 19.8) reported using more negative coping strategies than those led by men (mean rCSI = 15.0). Compared to May 2016, there was no significant change in the overall rCSI score of either household type. However, a slightly lower proportion of households led by men (61%) reported limiting portion sizes at meals than the previous round (65%) (figure 3).

Purchasing power is defined here as the number of cups of rice or maize that can be purchased with a day’s wage. It remained constant in three regions (Analamanga, Analanjrofo and Androy), but declined in Atsinanana and Anosy (figure 5).
REPORTS FROM THE SOUTH THAT FOOD AID IS NEEDED

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to gauge their perception of food security in their communities. Those in the south frequently mentioned “need of food aid”. People are also worried about inflation, rainfall and the lack of access to food (figure 6).

Figure 6: Word cloud of responses from the south

METHODOLOGY - mVAM REMOTE DATA COLLECTION

June 2016 marked the third round of remote data collection in Madagascar. A total of 1218 households were reached using text messaging (SMS) surveys. Respondents were asked questions on household demographics, coping behaviour, food prices and manual labour wages. Respondents could also describe the food security situation in their communities in their own words. Mobile phone surveys tend to be biased towards households who live in urban areas; 82 percent of responses to this survey came from Antananarivo province. Responses to the mVAM survey from some areas of Madagascar were low owing to limited mobile phone penetration rates and low literacy levels. Results do not cover south-western regions because an inadequate number of completed surveys were collected from this area.

For further information please contact:

Arif Husain  arif.husain@wfp.org
Jean-Martin Bauer  jean-martin.bauer@wfp.org
Andrew Odero  andrew.odero@wfp.org
Maherisoa Rakotonirainy  maherisoa.rakotonirainy@wfp.org

mVAM resources:
Website  http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/
Blog  mvAM.org
Toolkit  http://resources.vam.wfp.org/mVAM