Drought and conflict drive an atypically early start of the lean season

- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes persist in the conflict-affected areas of Cabo Delgado and across the drought-affected areas in southern Mozambique. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to start emerging in October in southern Tete and northern Manica provinces as household food stocks deplete. According to the National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC), conflict in Cabo Delgado and the central region has internally displaced approximately 368,000 people. Cholera and acute watery diarrhea outbreaks are also exacerbating the crisis in Cabo Delgado. Around 600 health care workers have fled due to insecurity, and 25 health facilities have closed, limiting healthcare access and exacerbating acute malnutrition, especially in children.

- As of September 29, 2020, Mozambique has a 6.3 percent test positivity rate, and 8,556 confirmed COVID-19 cases. On September 7, the government declared an indefinite national state of public calamity and declared a Red Alert, the highest level of INGC’s disaster alert levels. Despite some relaxation in COVID-19 control measures, the most vulnerable households, especially in urban and peri-urban areas, continue to have difficulty obtaining sufficient food and income and are likely in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). The National Institute of Social Action is registering the most vulnerable households in large urban areas and beginning to expand social programs and distribute cash and food with the support of partners.

- Following an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in Magude district in Maputo province in the early August and Angónia district in Tete province in September, the National Directorate for Livestock Development (DNDP) banned the movement of livestock and their related products from the affected and neighboring districts. However, DNDP recently authorized the slaughter of cattle, goats, sheep, and pigs in slaughterhouses in the districts of Magude and Manhiça in Maputo province and Angónia district in Tete province. This measure could slow the increase in final sale prices, primarily beef, particularly in urban areas.

- In August 2020, maize grain prices increased by 9-37 percent compared to July across most monitored markets, except in Changara, Maputo, and Massinga, where maize grain prices remained relatively stable. Across monitored markets, maize grain prices were 20-43 percent above the five-year average and generally following seasonal trends. As parts of the country are experiencing atypically early lean season conditions, maize grain prices are increasing, particularly in areas affected by shocks where many poor households are already dependant on market food purchases. Maize meal and rice prices have remained stable in most monitored markets.

- According to international and national forecasts, the start of the 2020/21 rainy season will most likely begin in October. Average to above-average cumulative rainfall is forecast through December 2020, except in Cabo Delgado province, eastern Nampula province, and northeastern Niassa province, where near average cumulative rainfall is expected. From December 2020 to March 2021, there is an increased likelihood for average to above-average rainfall across the country, and a near-average number of cyclones strikes.
SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR

NORTH:
- April: Main harvest
- May: Second harvest
- June-July: Harvest
- August: Land preparation
- September: Planting
- October-November: Rain and cyclone season
- December-January: Lean season
- February-March: Peak labor demand
- April: Green harvest

SOUTH/CENTRAL:
- April: Second planting
- May: Land preparation
- June-July: Main planting
- August: Rain and cyclone season
- September: Lean season
- October-November: Green harvest
- December-January: Main harvest
- February-March: Peak labor demand