

# ESWATINI

## DRY SPELLS, HIGH FOOD PRICES AND INCREASING UNEMPLOYMENT WORSEN ESWATINI'S FOOD SECURITY SITUATION

## IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS JUNE 2019 – MARCH 2020

Issued 2 July 2019

CURRENT JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2019			PROJECTED OCTOBER 2019 - MARCH 2020		
 <b>205,000</b> 22% of the population  People facing severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+)	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe	 <b>232,000</b> 25% of the population  People facing severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+)	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4	47,000 People in Emergency		Phase 4	47,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3	157,000 People in Crisis		Phase 3	185,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2	370,000 People in Stress		Phase 2	370,000 People in Stress
	Phase 1	369,000 People minimally food insecure		Phase 1	341,000 People minimally food insecure
IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION			IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION		

### Overview

Between June and September 2019, it is estimated that around 205,000 people (22% of the rural population) are experiencing severe acute food insecurity and require urgent humanitarian action. These include around 157,000 people being in a Crisis situation (Phase 3) and around 47,000 people being in an Emergency situation (Phase 4). Around 370,000 people are also in a Stressed situation (Phase 2) and require livelihood support.

In comparison with last year, the situation has deteriorated, with two of the regions shifting to a more severe phase. This deterioration can be attributed to the anticipated drought, which led to farmers choosing not to plant their fields, reducing casual labour opportunities and food availability, with one-fifth of households depleting their assets or engaging in crisis or emergency coping strategies to mitigate moderate to large food gaps.

Between October 2019 and March 2020, around 232,000 people (25% of the rural population) are estimated that they will likely experience severe acute food insecurity, out of which an estimated 185,000 people will likely face a Crisis situation (IPC Phase 3), and around 47,000 people will likely be in an Emergency situation (IPC Phase 4). Around 370,000 people will also be in a Stressed situation (IPC Phase 2). Assuming that rainfall will be better in this year's rainy season, all regions will maintain the same phase classification in the projected period. However, it is likely that around 28,000 people will slip into Crisis (IPC Phase 3), since all households will run out of food stocks before the end of the year, and due to the usual increase in human and livestock disease outbreaks and crop pest incidences in the rainy season.

### Key Drivers



#### Dry Spells

Dry spells and the possibilities of an El Nino induced drought episode had a negative effect on the crop production.



#### High Unemployment

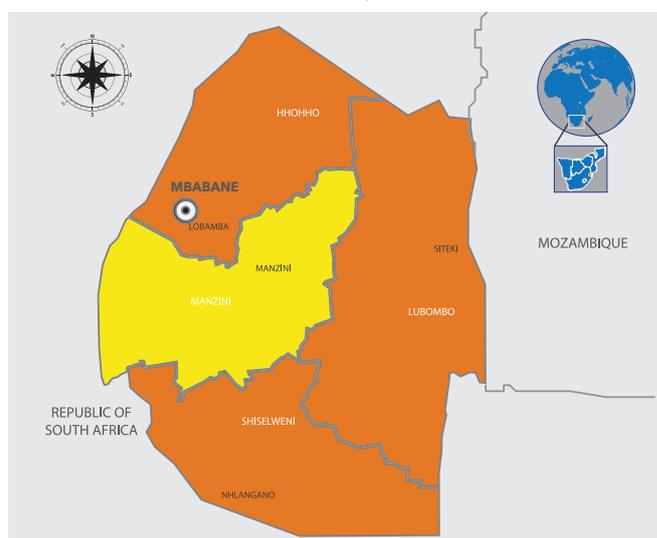
The high unemployment rate led to low purchasing power, reducing food access and availability.



#### High Food Prices

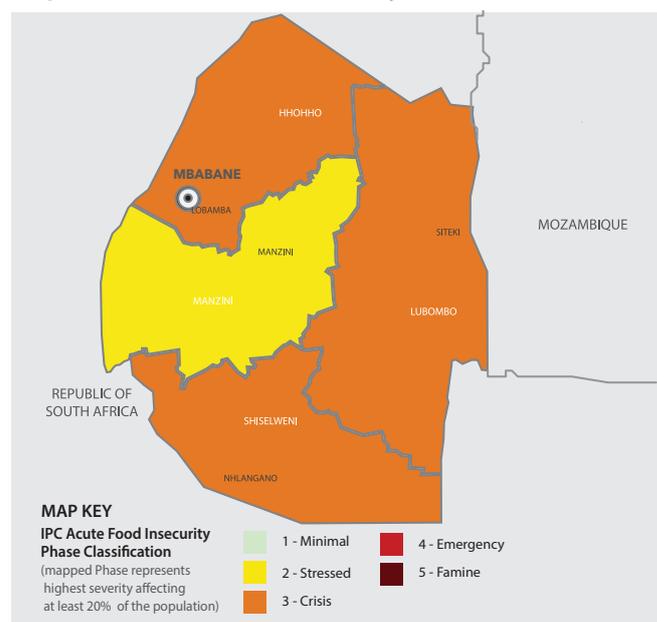
The unusually high prices of commodities further exacerbated food access and availability for the poor already living below the poverty line.

### Current Acute Food Insecurity June- Sept 2019



Source: VAC and IPC Technical Working Group, Eswatini

### Projected Acute Food Insecurity Oct 2019 - Mar 2020



Source: VAC and IPC Technical Working Group, Eswatini

### IPC Analysis Partners:





## SITUATION OVERVIEW, KEY DRIVERS AND LIMITING FACTORS

### Current Situation Overview

Between June and September 2019, around 205,000 people (22% of the rural population) in Eswatini are experiencing severe acute food insecurity, out of which 157,000 people are facing a Crisis situation (IPC Phase 3) and 47,000 people are facing an Emergency situation (IPC Phase 4). 370,000 people are also in a Stressed situation (IPC Phase 2). This overall food insecurity can be attributed to the following situation: The inadequacy and misrepresentation of early warning messages communicated to the farmers led to poor decision making in preparation of impact response options. A high proportion of farmers chose not to plant their fields anticipating drought in the second half of the rainfall season.

This reduced casual labour opportunities, as well as food availability, with all households depleting their food stocks before the end of the year. Although food aid in the form of maize and beans was provided to some households in three of the four regions (Hhohho, Shiselweni and Lubombo) between January and April, only about a quarter of the daily caloric requirement was provided and for only two commodities. A more in-depth description of the situation in each region follows:

In Manzini, compared to last year, a shift in Phase classification from being food secure (Phase 1) to being Stressed (Phase 2) has been observed, since in the current period, around two thirds of the rural population have minimally adequate food consumption, but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies. An increase in population facing severe acute food insecurity has also been observed, and the number of people in Crisis doubling compared to last year. Households hosting chronically ill members, especially those with HIV, Cancer and TB, are among the most affected. The most affected areas are the Dry Middleveld, Lowveld and also the Peri-Urban. Factors driving the overall food insecurity are the high unemployment rate and poor access to arable land. The late onset of rains and the incidents of dry spells resulted in lower food stocks, affecting food access and availability.

In Hhohho, compared to last year, a shift in Phase classification from Stressed (Phase 2) to Crisis (Phase 3) has been observed, since in the current period, around a quarter of the rural population is only able to minimally meet food needs by depleting essential livelihood assets or using crisis coping strategies. The key drivers of the severe acute food insecurity are the following: the unusual high prices of food commodities in rural areas; and the inadequate and misrepresented early warning messages and delay in mechanization from the National Maize Corporation, which led to half of the arable land not being planted, and reduced labour opportunities, harvest and income. The population that will be affected most is the poor and poorest, mostly in the Dry Middleveld and Lowveld, Cattle and Maize areas, because they will run out of food stocks during the current period.

In Shiselweni, a shift in Phase classification from Stressed (Phase 2) to Crisis (Phase 3) has also been observed. In the current period, around a quarter of the population are found to be experiencing severe acute food insecurity, since they are only able to mitigate moderate and large food consumption gaps by employing crisis or emergency coping strategies. The food security crisis is further exacerbated by the high reliance on subsistence agriculture, the loss of income due to climatic shocks, and the low purchasing power. The increase in staple maize meal prices further erodes food access. The households that are most affected are in the Dry Middleveld and Lowveld, Cattle and Maize areas.

Although Lubombo has maintained its Phase classification of Crisis (Phase 3) for the current period, the population in this phase has increased compared to last season. Since the region is rainfall dependent, its agricultural production was highly affected by the dry spells and erratic rainfall. The high HIV prevalence in the region (30%) also affects its productive capacity. Over a third of the population in the region live below the extreme poverty line, and access to arable land is low (38%). Nearly half of the population will run out of food stocks in less than two months. The region experienced 14% loss of employment for the household head, pushing the unemployment rate up to 28.6%, and reducing remittances to 13%. Only 16% of the population is engaged in casual labour. The region has about 15% of earth dams dried up so livestock production, especially ruminants, is compromised. Food security will be severe in the Dry Middleveld, Lowveld, Cattle and Maize and Moist Middleveld areas, where the very poor and poor households are.



## SITUATION OVERVIEW, KEY DRIVERS AND LIMITING FACTORS

### Projected Situation Overview

Between October 2019 and March 2020, around 232,000 people (25% of the rural population) are estimated that they will likely experience severe acute food insecurity, out of which an estimated 185,000 people will likely face a Crisis situation (IPC Phase 3), and 47,000 people will likely be in an Emergency situation (IPC Phase 4). Around 370,000 people will also be in a Stressed situation (IPC Phase 2). Compared to the current analysis, around 28,000 people are likely to slip into Crisis (IPC Phase 3). This projected situation is based on the following assumptions: Above average rainfall conditions are expected country-wide between October and December, leading to an increase in water availability and improved pasture, but also the possibility of some disease outbreaks such as cholera, malaria and Acute Watery Diarrhoea. Animal disease outbreaks, mainly affecting cattle, are also expected. The Fall Armyworm will still remain a major threat and Alien Invasive Plant Species could affect rangelands, livestock and crop production and water availability. Maize and legume prices are expected to increase. Furthermore, all households will have depleted their food stocks before the end of the year.

According to assumptions and historical trends, the Phase 2 classification (Stressed) in Manzini is expected to be retained, as well as the populations in each phase. Although most households, especially the poor and the very poor, will run out of food stocks early in the season, leading to the depletion of their assets, casual labour available in the rainy season should be able to provide them with income for food access, and so it is not expected that the situation will further deteriorate, unless rainfall is below average.

In the projection period, Hhohho is also likely to retain its Phase 3 classification (Crisis), as well as the populations in each phase. Aside from the expected shocks of running out of food stocks early in the season, and the high prices of maize and legumes, other limiting factors of food security affecting this region are flash floods, and Alien Invasive Plant Species, which will likely affect livestock and crop production, and water availability. Zones that are likely to have problems are the Dry Middleveld and the Low Cattle and Maize, because they are the drier zones and usually do not receive enough water. The zones that are likely to receive enough water and provide labour opportunities are the Highveld, Cattle and Maize, the Timber Highlands and the Moist Middleveld. Since the rainfall situation is expected to improve, the sale of wild foods will provide income, improving food access. It is therefore expected that the situation will also not deteriorate in Hhohho, unless rainfall is below average.

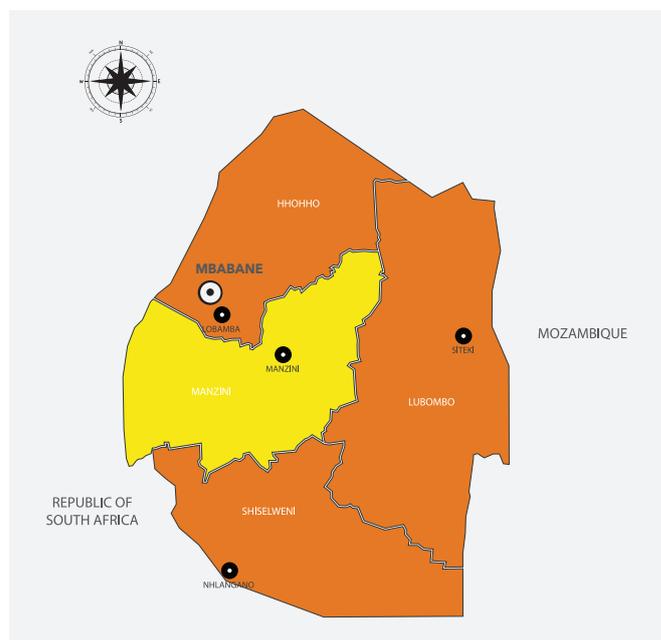
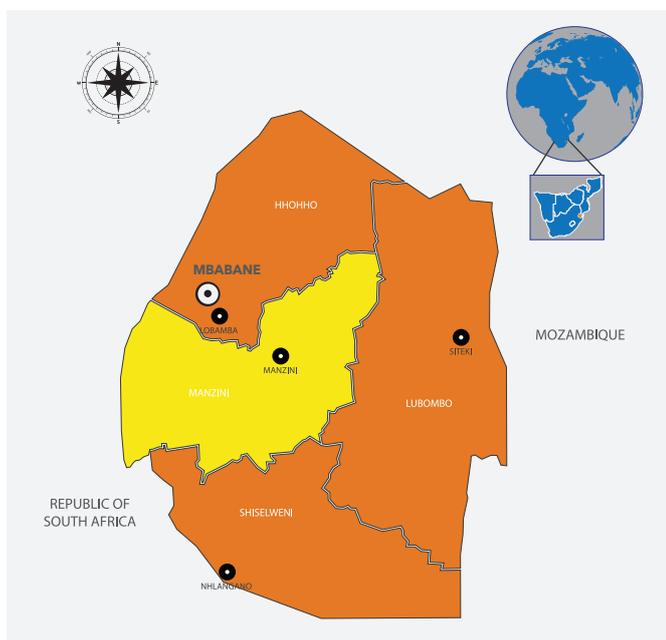
Between October 2019 and March 2020, the Shiselweni region is also expected to retain the Phase 3 classification (Crisis). However, it is likely that the population in Phase 3 will increase by about ten thousand people (5% of population), with many households, especially the poor and the very poor living in the drier parts of the region, likely facing high food insecurity and loss of assets. The situation is expected to be more severe in populations living in the drier parts of the region; the Dry Middleveld and Lowveld, Cattle and Maize areas. The uncertainty surrounding the tractor hire situation may also negatively affect planting for the next season. Increased availability of wild foods and seed and fertiliser subsidies may help to slightly improve food availability. Overall, however, food access and availability is expected to deteriorate.

In Lubombo, it is expected that although the population in Crisis (Phase 3) will increase by about 18,000 people (10% of the population), the region will still retain the same Phase classification. The planting season and starting of rains will increase the availability of wild foods and petty trade, as well as casual labour opportunities. Improved livestock production is anticipated during the rainy season due to improved pasture conditions and water availability, however livestock diseases and parasites are likely to increase. Possible dry spells could affect rain-fed agriculture, which could lead further increase unemployment. Overall, food access and availability is expected to deteriorate.

# IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY FOR JUNE 2019- MARCH 2020

Current Acute Food Insecurity (June - Sept 2019)

Projected Acute Food Insecurity (Oct 2019 - Mar 2020)



**MAP KEY**

**IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification**  
(mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)



**Notes**

In the projection period, evidence shows that the situation, perpetuated by the depleting food stocks, is not likely to improve. Further deterioration will be mitigated through the anticipated good rainfall and increased labour opportunities. However, in the regions of Lubombo and Shiselweni, the situation is likely to deteriorate slightly, in zones that do not receive enough rainfall. All districts have High (3) evidence levels.

**Population Table (Current)**

Region	Total Population	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
		#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Hhohho	255,616	102,000	40	90,000	35	51,000	20	13,000	5	0	0	3	64,000	25
Lubombo	182,851	55,000	30	82,000	45	37,000	20	9,000	5	0	0	3	46,000	25
Manzini	314,261	126,000	40	141,000	45	31,000	10	16,000	5	0	0	2	47,000	15
Shiselweni	191,107	86,000	45	57,000	30	38,000	20	9,000	5	0	0	3	48,000	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>943,835</b>	<b>369,000</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>370,000</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>205,000</b>	<b>22</b>

**Population Table (Projected)**

Region	Total Population	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
		#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Hhohho	255,616	102,000	40	90,000	35	51,000	20	13,000	5	0	0	3	64,000	25
Lubombo	182,851	37,000	20	82,000	45	55,000	30	9,000	5	0	0	3	64,000	35
Manzini	314,261	126,000	40	141,000	45	31,000	10	16,000	5	0	0	2	47,000	15
Shiselweni	191,107	76,000	40	57,000	30	48,000	25	9,000	5	0	0	3	57,000	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>943,835</b>	<b>341,000</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>370,000</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>185,000</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>232,000</b>	<b>25</b>



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### Response Priorities

In order to address Eswatini's food insecurity, the following interventions are recommended for the most affected areas:

- Humanitarian assistance in the form of food or cash for those in Phases 3 and 4;
- Promoting and strengthening of livelihood programmes;
- Strengthening and increasing in school feeding programmes;
- Constructing of earth dams to improve water irrigation;
- Upscaling water harvesting techniques at household level;
- Encouraging the principle of work for food;
- Encouraging species diversification in livestock production especially small ruminants, which adapt easily to harsh weather conditions;
- Enhancing extension services to educate on the growing of drought tolerant crops;
- Providing farm inputs which are more area focused; and
- Improving of Government tractor hire services, and
- Developing an interface mechanisms to facilitate a two-way communication in the delivery of early warning messages

### Situation Monitoring

- The performance of the labour market;
- Changes in food prices, especially the price of maize and legumes;
- Livelihood support programs especially agriculture-based ones;
- Rainfall and drought;
- Crop pests and animal diseases; and
- Labour opportunities.

### Plan for next analysis

In view of the envisaged developments in the macro-economic (policy changes, inflation, etc.) and environmental contexts (rainfall performance, disease outbreaks, etc.), it will be necessary to carry out an update of the current analysis. This will be done in early October 2019 to give a situation update up to the end of March 2020.

## PROCESS, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

### Process and Methodology

A four-day IPC Acute Food Insecurity Version 3.0 Level 1 Training for the Eswatini Technical Working Group (TWG) comprised of representatives from different agencies was organized to familiarize them with the new concepts of the IPC analysis approach. This learning process gave the TWG, an opportunity to go through the protocols, combined reference tables, analytical framework and the steps in the Information Support System (ISS) portal.

The team was divided into four groups with each group assigned to consolidate the wide-ranging evidence and information according to each administrative region, which is the unit of analysis adopted for the process. The teams then vetted the analysis findings for the current and the projected period in order to achieve consensus and adhere to all IPC protocols.

### Limitations of the analysis

Since the IPC is integrated in the Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis of Eswatini (VAA), the IPC analysis process does not take into consideration the data preparation derived from the primary data and uploaded to the ISS portal, which is a major input to this activity, and so the analysis process was interrupted and delayed. The knowledge on the indicators used in the analysis was inadequate, especially on how they should be interpreted and used during the analysis.

### Sources

The annual livelihoods and vulnerability assessment carried out in 2019 provided the most current set of indicators collected through the household survey and the focus group sessions using the HEA methodology. Other sources of evidence were reports from various sectors which were conducted prior to this analysis. Some of these reports include the Eswatini Household and Income Survey (EHIES), the Eswatini Population and Housing Census (2017), the Agromet Bulletin, the Rapid Agriculture Survey (2019), and other sources of secondary data.

### What is the IPC and IPC Acute Food Insecurity?

The IPC is a set of tools and procedures to classify the severity and characteristics of acute food and nutrition crises as well as chronic food insecurity based on international standards. The IPC consists of four mutually reinforcing functions, each with a set of specific protocols (tools and procedures). The core IPC parameters include consensus building, convergence of evidence, accountability, transparency and comparability. The IPC analysis aims at informing emergency response as well as medium and long-term food security policy and programming.

For the IPC, Acute Food Insecurity is defined as any manifestation of food insecurity found in a specified area at a specific point in time of a severity that threatens lives or livelihoods, or both, regardless of the causes, context or duration. It is highly susceptible to change and can occur and manifest in a population within a short amount of time, as a result of sudden changes or shocks that negatively impact on the determinants of food insecurity.

### Contact for further Information

#### Thembumenzi Dube

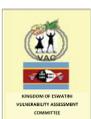
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This analysis has been conducted under the patronage of the Kingdom of Eswatini's Vulnerability Assessment Committee, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Disaster Management Agency, Save the Children, the Red Cross and World Food Programme.

Classification of food insecurity and malnutrition was conducted using the IPC protocols, which are developed and implemented worldwide by the IPC Global Partnership - Action Against Hunger, CARE, CILSS, EC-JRC, FAO, FEWSNET, Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, IGAD, Oxfam, PROGRESAN-SICA, SADC, Save the Children, UNICEF and WFP.

### IPC Analysis Partners:



Save the Children



World Food Programme