



Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition

InfoFlash

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Information and Comments on Food and Nutritional Security in Mozambique

The Food and Nutritional Security Situation in the ten Provinces of Mozambique normalized

NOTE OF THE EDITOR

The rapid Monitoring of February 2006 indicated that the FNS situation had improved and that the humanitarian assistance offered for a period of three months in order to ensure the recuperation of the affected populations, should be reduced with 30%. In this period, the nutritional evaluation indicated that the nutritional situation was not serious.

Thus, from 28 May to 4 June 2006 the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN), through the multisectoral Vulnerability Analysis Group (GAV), carried out a rapid mission to monitor the current FNS situation

The mission's "general objective" was to evaluate the present situation of vulnerability to food and nutritional insecurity in the country and its "specific objectives" were the following:

1. Evaluate the geographic extension/magnitude and the impact of the disasters (flooding, earthquakes, drought) on the affected areas and on the most vulnerable groups;
2. Analyse the impact of the mitigation activities that were developed and are ongoing;
3. Evaluate the local resources and capacities available for mitigating the effects of the disasters, and the respective constraints; and
4. Project the evolution of FSN for the year 2006/07.

Government Technicians from Central and Provincial level and cooperation partners of SETSAN participated in this mission.

The visited districts were: Magude, Matutuine and Namaacha in Maputo; Mabalane, Massingir, Guijá, Chókwè, Chigubo and Chibuto in Gaza; Mabote, Inhassoro, Massinga, Panda and Homoine in Inhambane; Guro, Machaze, Macossa and Tambara in Manica; Caia, Chemba and Machanga in Sofala; Changara, Mágoè and Mutarara in Tete; Memba, Nacarôa, Nacala-a-Velha and Mossuril in Nampula; Palma, Quissanga and Mueda in Cabo Delgado; Lago, Mecula, Marrupa and Majune in Niassa.

The results were registered in the form of provincial reports covering the country's ten provinces, which are available for consultation.

The present Infoflash presents a summary of the most relevant facts in terms of FNS, such as the development of the Agricultural Campaign, Markets, Water, Nutritional Situation and the respective conclusions and recommendations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The FNS situation improved** after consecutive years of extreme food and nutritional insecurity (InSAN) due to drought.
- **Pockets of InSAN may emerge** due to exhaustion of food reserves, estimated to last between 3 to 5 months, especially in the arid and semi-arid areas.
- **The results of the agricultural campaign were better** than in the previous year and some provinces show the best production of the last five years while the food reserves are higher than those of the same period from 2005.
- The **availability of food increased** with the rains, but the access to sources of drinking water remains a problem in the rural areas, where the **populations walk long distances** to fetch water for consumption.
- **Initiatives for collecting and making use of rainwater**, especially for facing the dry periods, **are still in the early stages**.
- The **markets** are reasonably well supplied and the **prices of the main agricultural products** tend to **stabilize** or to **decrease**.
- The **prices of manufactured products** are stable with a **slight increase**, especially in the rural areas, owing to high transport costs caused by the increase in fuel prices.
- **Livestock breeding is in full recovery** and the physical condition of the animals reflects these improvements.
- The levels of **chronic malnutrition**, reflected in a **BPN**, especially in the country's north, **endemic malaria** in most parts of the country, the incidence of **chronic diseases** and the **limited access to drinking water** continue to represent a serious threat to the well being of the communities.
- **Acute malnutrition**, reflected in **CI**, **diminished**, due to the increased availability of food, the absence of natural disasters and to the various mitigation interventions, although some **districts registered levels above normal**.
- **AIDS** continues to be a **threat to human capital** given that it may be a cause and a consequence of the InSAN in the country.

Methodology used in the Monitoring

The adopted methodology was based on the ongoing decentralization process and on the Elaboration of Instruments to Collect Data and Analyse the Present Vulnerability. The methodological process can be summarized in 4 distinct phases:

1. **Development of matrixes** to obtain information on the pillars of FNS, namely availability, access and use, complemented by information on the ongoing interventions, the survival strategies and the nutritional situation
2. **Compilation of secondary information** that served as support to the provincial analyses and consisted in data concerning the production, the distribution of rains, the nutritional situation, water supply, food aid, prices and other indicators.
3. **Supervision and facilitation of the SETSAN-Ps by SETSAN-C.** In this phase three districts most critical in terms of FNS were visited in order to, jointly with key informants, verify the truthfulness of the data on the visited districts that were presented. The key informants at district level were, among others: the District Administrators, the district technical team, NGOs, formal and informal business people and farmers.
4. **Consolidation of the information** at national level for the elaboration of a national report on FNS.

In order to carry out the field work, ten teams were formed at central level, which then travelled to the provinces using rapid appraisal techniques while visiting three districts in each province.

Availability of Food and Livestock

In comparison with the previous year the availability of food improved. Data from the DNSA indicate that cereals showed an increase of 10,4%, cassava of 13,8% and vegetables of 9,6%. The improvement of the production was due to the satisfactory distribution of the rains and to the promotion of the seed and agricultural input fairs programme, which resulted in the ample availability of seeds so that the farmers could continually sow during the 1st agricultural season (October – March).

Table1: Preliminary production results of the 2005/06 agricultural campaign, comparison with the results from the 2004/05 agricultural campaign.

Crops	Agr. Campaign 2004/05		Agr. Campaign 2005/06		Variation of	
	Area (ha)	Production (Ton)	Area (ha)	Production (Ton)	Area (%)	Production (%)
Cereals	2.255.784	1.899.391	2.304.535	2.097.641	2,16	10,4
Vegetables	761.104	332.628	773.667	364.680	1.65	9,6
Cassava	1.106.289	6.634.924	1.125.515	7.551.727	1,7	13,8

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, National Directorate of Agrarian Services, May 2006

The 2nd season (May - September) is well in progress and may contribute to the improvement of the food availability for the Households. It should be noted that the 2nd season contributes some 15-30% to a family's consumption. This season contributes some 15% to horticulture.

Livestock breeding is in full expansion, thanks to the promotion and animal health programmes. Outbreaks of Newcastle disease and of African swine fever were reported in various provinces, but these were promptly brought under control.

Bird Flu

Up to now not a single case of bird flu has been reported. As it represents a great risk worldwide, the Government is operationalizing surveillance systems and rapid reaction plans in case an outbreak occurs. The National Bird Flu Action Plan was recently approved by the Council of Ministers, and it is accompanied by awareness programmes.

As part of the preventive measures, the GAV round analysed the awareness activities and the existence of the current Contingency Plan. With a view to guarantee a better response by this Plan, a survey was made of the five districts with the highest poultry production in order to define the priorities of the activities in terms of awareness raising, surveillance and evaluation of potential economic losses with an impact on FNS.

Food Balance

Points to a national surplus of maize (99,000 Metric Tons-MT) for the period between April 2006 and March 2007 (Special Bulletin of June 2006 – DNC/MIC).

Generally speaking, the country is self-sufficient and can ensure the internal consumption of basic food through the contribution of cassava and maize production. However, SETSAN/GAV would like to emphasize that the fact that maize is available does not necessarily mean that the FNS is guaranteed.

Taking into account the regional differences in production, the consumption patterns and the food habits that may contribute to the occurrence of localized shortages due to the combination of adverse conditions (for instance low soil fertility, irregular rainfall, plagues and crop diseases, etc.), it is crucial to ensure the supervision of shortages by purchases on the local market.

Table 2: National Food Balance for 2006/07 (in 000 MT)

	Maize	Rice	Wheat	Sorghum Millet	Total cereals	Cassava	Other tubers	Beans/ Peanut
Total Available	1.618	207	90	415	2329	6.146	519	T407
Initial Stock	84	91	90	33	298	105	41	42
Production	1534	116	0	382	2031	6041	478	365
Consumption	1518	493	369	381	2761	5708	459	363
Shortage/ Surplus	99	-286	-279	34	-437	439	61	43
Imports	97	337	372	0	806	0	0	10
Exports	130	0	2	0	132	5	0	5
Final Stock	66	51	91	34	242	434	61	48

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, National Directorate of Commerce, 2006

Although the end reserves appear to be sufficient to satisfy human consumption demands at national level, data from the present monitoring indicate that the food reserves at Household

level may last until the next harvests, with the exception of some districts where they lay last between 3 to 5 months.

With respect to food aid, there was a reduction of some 30% in the volumes of food distributed among the vulnerable population in February 2006.

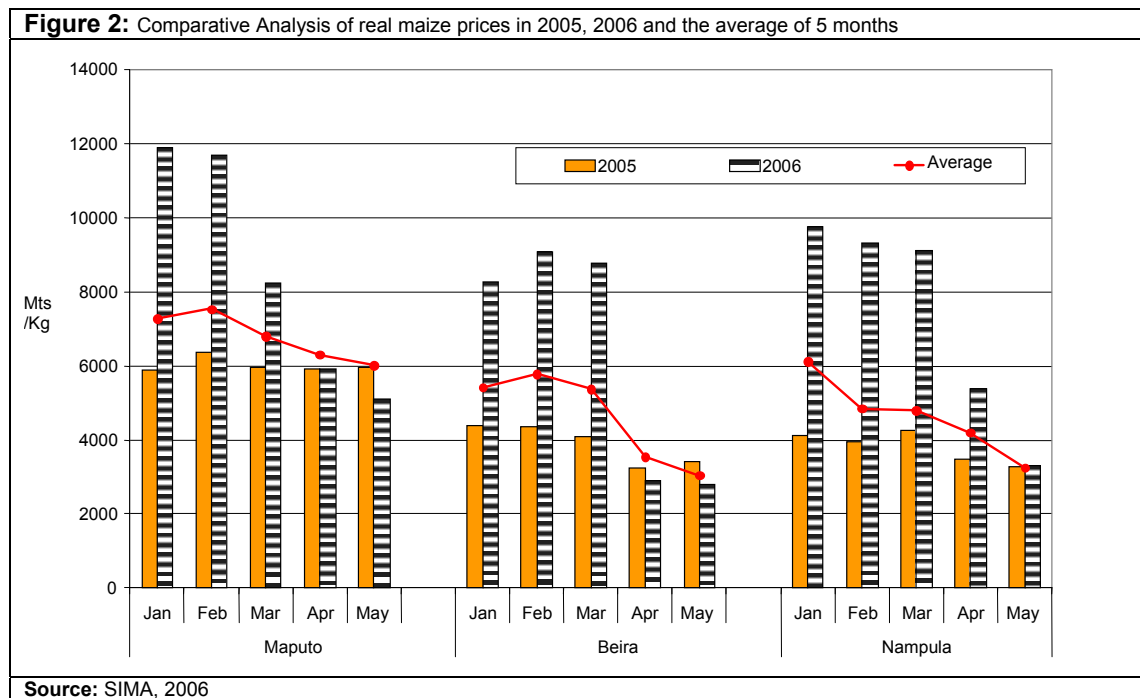
In the northern region of the country, especially in the provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado, the conflict between Man and animal continues to be a challenge for guaranteeing the FNS of the Households.

Markets and Prices

The markets were supplied with basic food products and with some local products such as vegetables and legumes.

With respect to the situation of prices of basic products, a slight increase was noted. In general, the prices of basic products (maize, beans, sugar, charcoal etc.) are stable in comparison with last year. Prices were highest in December, but now they decreased and remain stable.

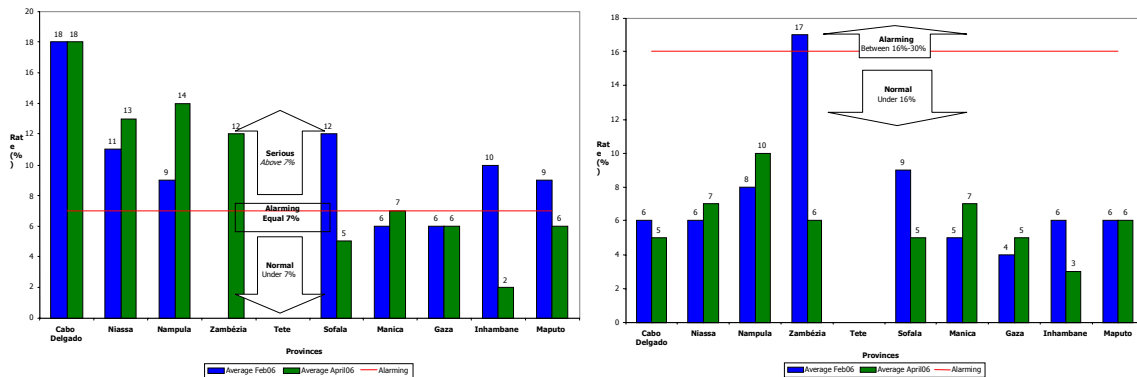
Selling products in the markets of remote areas turns them more expensive and limits the buying power of the poorest families due to the influence of fuel prices on the transport costs.



Health and Nutrition

The levels of chronic malnutrition, normally reflected by the indicators Weight per Height and Low Birth Weight (BPN), especially in the country's north, endemic malaria in most parts of the country, the incidence of chronic diseases and the limited access to drinking water continue to represent a serious threat to the well being of the communities.

Acute malnutrition, reflected in Insufficient Growth (CI), diminished, due to the increased availability of food, the absence of natural disasters and to the various mitigation interventions. However, some districts continue to register levels above normal.



The most common diseases are malaria, anaemia, diarrhoeas, respiratory diseases and STD-HIV/AIDS, above all in children and women. In terms of potential epidemics, there have been some cases of measles in districts such as Chigubo in Gaza.

The access to, and quality of, water constitute an important factor for human health and FNS. It was noted that the rehabilitation of holes, the construction of wells and the rehabilitation and construction of water supply systems are slow and have a limited coverage.

Income Sources and Survival Mechanisms

The three main income sources for families in order of importance are: the selling of agricultural products, small trade and remittances. However, for the most vulnerable families these main sources are: the selling of agricultural products, the selling of charcoal and firewood and the selling of livestock products.

Growing cash crops is an additional source of income that contributes to the economic access to food, while it is an income source for satisfying other basic Household needs as well (e.g. school material, health services, travel, etc.).

In general, an increase in and a diversification of the Households' income sources were registered, which is sustained by the absence of extreme survival strategies. To date there are no cases of consuming famine food or other types of adaptation to extreme consumption strategies.

Table 10: Variation in the Number of Meals and in the Households' Diet Quality

Regions	N° of Meals of the Households		Diet Quality of the Households in relation to previous monitoring	
	February 2006	Actual	February 2006	Actual
North	2-1	2-3	same	better
Centre	2-3	2-3	better	better
South	2-3	2-3	better	better

The noted increase in the number of consumed meals and the diversification of the food diet (e.g. consumption of products with higher nutritional value) are signs for an improvement on the diet quality in various districts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

- The FNS situation improved considerably after two consecutive years of severe drought and dryness. The nutritional situation improved significantly due to the stabilization of the number of consumed meals, the improvement of the diet quality and of the climatic conditions.
- An increase in the production of food crops was registered. Data from the DNSA point to increases of 10,4% in cereals, 9,6% in legumes and 13,8% in cassava. These increases reveal the better production realized in the last five years.
- There was a satisfactory progress in the number of animals due to the promotion programmes, the improvement of pasture and watering conditions. Animal health is also good, and to date no occurrences of Bird Flu have been recorded.
- The country enjoys a satisfactory situation of self-sufficiency in food, i.e. in the availability of food, with food reserves of some 99,000 MT of maize, 439,000 MT of cassava and 43,000 MT of groundnut. However, at the Household level, local pockets of Food and Nutritional Insecurity may occur from October 2006 onwards.
- The markets are relatively well supplied with agricultural products, owing to the good harvests of the present campaign, while a stabilization of prices has been registered, contributing to the improvement of the Households' access to food.
- Significant improvements with respect to the income sources of the Households are reported, especially of those involved in agricultural production.
- As a result of the increases in fuel prices, food products are becoming more expensive, especially in the remote rural areas.
- Endemic malaria, the poor access to basic services and food habits that in large part are related to taboos and beliefs, continue to negatively affect the chronic malnutrition in the country.
- AIDS was frequently reported in all visited areas. Many of the children admitted in hospitals because of malnutrition suffer from diseases associated with HIV/AIDS.

- A reduction in the use of extreme survival strategies was reported (e.g. pass the day without eating, reduction of the number of meals and exacerbated selling of animals), compared to the same period of last year.
- The mitigation programmes such as food aid, food supplements and the holding of seed and agricultural input fairs, had a significant impact on the recuperation of the populations, which contributed to the improvement of the actual FNS situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ For institutional questions:

- The SETSAN-Ps should lead the coordination of the analyses of FNS and vulnerability, as a response to the FNS decentralization process and the institutionalisation of SETSAN at the level of each province;
- Improve and activate the participation of the members and partners of the SETSAN-Ps;
- Integrate the data of the Vulnerability Analysis in the strategic development plans of the provinces and districts, especially PEDD, PASAN, PAAO, OGE among others, in order to reduce the impact of acute and chronic vulnerability;
- Accelerate programmes of training and capacitating leaders and members, partners and technicians of the SETSAN-Ps in the holistic treatment of FNS;
- Strengthen advocacy directed towards decision makers at provincial and district level, in order to improve the sensitivity concerning FNS issues;
- Ensure a better articulation, coordination and circulation of information between SETSAN-C and the SETSAN-Ps.

➤ In the area of Food Availability:

- Monitor the performance of the second agricultural campaign, and the effects on Households' food reserves lasting less than three months;
- Disseminate and accompany the awareness campaigns concerning the bird flu, as well as the implementation of the contingency plan;
- Strengthen small scale irrigation plans that include the reparation of pumps and supports, the rehabilitation and construction of dams in areas regularly affected by dryness;
- Monitor the ongoing activities to reduce the territorial conflict man/animal, especially in the north and centre of the country;
- Monitor and evaluate the food reserves in the districts of arid and semi-arid areas (3 to 5 months of reserves);
- Monitor and influence the holding of good quality and numerous input fairs before the beginning of the 2006/07 campaign, especially in areas that are semi-arid and difficult to access.

➤ **In the area of Access to Food:**

- Promote actions and advise the local consultation bodies with a view to intensifying the rehabilitation of the road network between the areas of high agricultural and livestock production, the areas with shortages and the potential markets in the country's south and centre;
- Strengthen the commercial sector in order to prices at district level, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable and remote districts;
- Reactivate the functioning of the multisectoral Market Group at the level of SETSAN Central;
- Promote the construction of silos for the conservation of agricultural surpluses in order to ensure a solid food reserve base for times of crisis;
- Ensure the creation of district credit banks in order to finance the extension of the commercial network and of income generating activities, with low-interest rates;
- Ensure a more inclusive and effective intervention in the water sector, jointly with the Provincial Directorates of Public works and Housing and their partners.

➤ **In the are of Food Use:**

- Intensify the education programmes on nutrition and environmental and food hygiene;
- Prioritize actions to improve access to basic services in the PEDDs, especially in the country's centre and north;
- Ensure more integrated nutrition analyses, taking into account the indicators related to the nutritional state of women in child-bearing age and of those who are pregnant;
- Improve the understanding of the socio-cultural causes and factors in FNS, within and outside the Households, at community level;
- Monitor and systematize separate information on the actual water supply situation and ongoing activities;
- Monitor the creation of small social infrastructures that enable the mounting of gutters and tanks for the catching, conservation and supply of water, giving priority to arid and semi-arid areas;
- Promote the dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation;
- Improve the food security and the nutritional state of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS at community level.