Namibia

**ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022**

- **0.75M** people or **30%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, December 2021–March 2022

**ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PROJECTION 2023**

- **0.39M** people or **15%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, January–March 2023

**Food crisis overview**

In December 2021–March 2022, corresponding to the lean season, 750,000 people were in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), including almost 120,000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This is the highest figure reported by the IPC for Namibia and represents 30% of the country’s population. The 70% increase in the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above between the 2021 and 2022 lean seasons was significantly higher than the increase in the population analysed (+13%). Key drivers of this concerning situation were drought, price shocks, and the economic impacts from COVID-19 measures (IPC, December 2021). The analysis was carried out before the start of the war in Ukraine.

**An improving outlook for 2023**

Compared with the 2022 peak, a considerable improvement was projected with the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above almost halving to 390,000 between January and March 2023. However, the situation remains serious, with six regions classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) – namely, Kavango East, Kavango West, Kunene, Omaheke, Otjozondjupa, and Oshikoto – although the number of people in IPC Phase 4 is projected to reduce to almost 6,000. Factors contributing to continued high levels of acute food insecurity include limited opportunities for casual work and rising food prices made worse by inflation, rising fuel prices and the effects of the war in Ukraine.

Between April and August 2023, food security is projected to improve further, as households start consuming food from their own production. An estimated 239,000 people are projected to be in IPC Phase 3 or above (IPC, February 2023).

**Acute food insecurity since 2016**

The severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity in Namibia have been rising steadily since its first IPC analysis in 2019, with the country first being included as a major food crisis in the GRFC 2022. The largest increase in magnitude was between the 2020 and 2021/2022 peaks.

**Drivers of the crisis, 2022–23**

- **Economic shocks**: Increases in food and non-food prices that started in 2021 continued in 2022, driven in part by increased import costs as a result of high fertilizer, food and fuel prices linked to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Prices of maize meal jumped sharply and reached record-high levels in the last quarter of 2022, mainly the result of elevated grain prices in South Africa, which is the main source of imports for the country. The high fuel prices combined with currency weakness inflated operational costs along the food value chain. Economic growth is forecast to slow in 2023, with adverse implications for employment and incomes while high food prices are also expected to diminish vulnerable households’ purchasing power (FAO, February 2023).

- **Weather extremes**: In the 2021/2022 season, drought and dry spells in drought-prone areas affected both crop and livestock production, with some farmers experiencing high rates of livestock mortality due to reduced water availability. Following a late start of seasonal rains, precipitation amounts increased from December 2022, fostering an improvement in vegetation conditions in January. The heavy rains also caused localized flooding in northern Namibia when crops were in germination and emergence stages, a period when they are particularly susceptible to flood damage (FAO, March 2023).

**Projected IPC acute food insecurity situation, January–March 2023**

- **1.0M** people or **40%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, January–March 2023

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