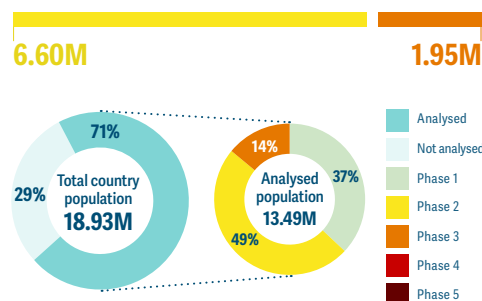


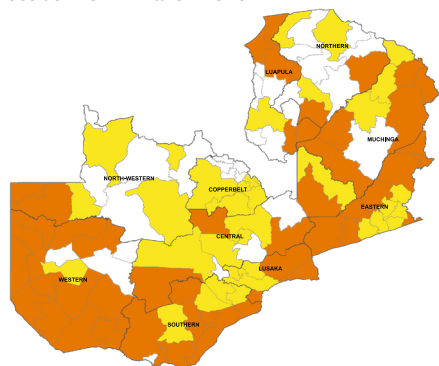
Zambia

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022/23

1.95M people or **14%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, **October 2022–March 2023**



IPC acute food insecurity situation, October 2022–March 2023



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: Zambia IPC TWG, August 2022.

Food crisis overview

The share of the analysed population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) decreased from 25 percent during the 2021 peak in February–March to 14 percent during October 2022–March 2023. The severity of acute food insecurity also decreased: no populations were in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) compared with over 230 000 people in February–March 2021.

Shocks – such as prolonged dry spells, flooding, reduced incomes, pests, and high input and food prices linked to the below-average 2022 harvest and war in Ukraine – continued to drive acute food insecurity. Households' reliance on food markets increased and around 1.95 million people were estimated to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in October 2022–March 2023. This 13 percent increase since February–March 2021 reflects a doubling of the analysed population. Out of the 91 districts covered in the October 2022–March 2023 analysis, 48 were classified in IPC Phase 3 (IPC, August 2022).

Acute food insecurity since 2016

For each of the seven editions of the GRFC, Zambia has been classified as a food crisis and defined as major crisis for the last five, with at least 1 million people in IPC Phase 3 or above largely due to the impact of weather extremes. The analysis coverage differed substantially from year to year. However, the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above in 2022 was lower than in 2019 and 2020, when a lower share of the population was analysed, suggesting an improvement in the situation.

Drivers of the crisis, 2022–23

Weather extremes The 2022 cereal harvest was below average due to poor distribution of rains. Flooding waterlogged crops in parts of the Central, Eastern, Muchinga, Copperbelt, Luapula, Lusaka, Southern and Western provinces and rainfall deficits led to areas bordering Zimbabwe, Malawi and

Mozambique experiencing severe drought conditions. Due to the La Niña event, rainfall amounts were forecast to be above average with the possibility of flooding between December 2022 and March 2023, while in northeastern areas, below-average precipitation until January 2023 was expected to cause delays in planting (FAO-GIEWS, December 2022; IPC, August 2022).

Crop pests Almost all provinces experienced fall armyworm infestations that devastated field crops in affected districts and were a contributing factor to the below-average harvest (IPC, August 2022).

Economic shocks Zambia's economic growth has stalled in recent years under the strain of the COVID-19 pandemic, recurrent weather shocks and falling prices of key export commodities (WFP, January 2023). At the start of the October 2022 lean season, the national average price of maize was about 30 percent higher year-on-year, underpinned by the low harvest and compounded by the war in Ukraine (FAO-GIEWS, December 2022). The offer of higher prices for maize in Malawi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo put upward pressure on prices in areas bordering these countries (IPC, August 2022).

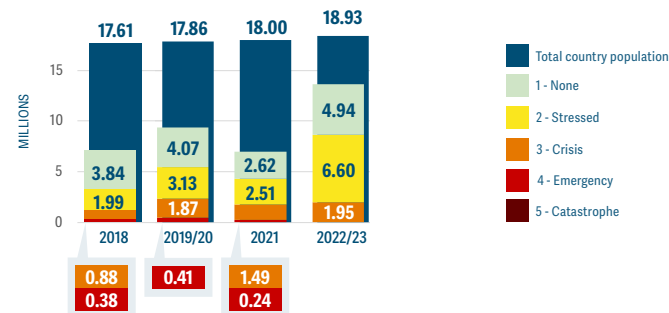
DISPLACEMENT

Refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees Zambia hosts around 93 500 refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees with nearly 12 000 new refugees registered in 2022 from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. The majority are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region and arrived between 2001 and 2020.

By the end of 2022, about 65 500 refugees and asylum-seekers lived in Mantapala, Meheba and Mayukwayukwa refugee settlements – about 70 percent of the refugee population – with the remainder in urban centres including Lusaka (UNHCR, February 2023). Insufficient funding in 2022 posed a challenge, particularly in Mantapala, where WFP reduced the food ration/cash transfers by up to 37 percent (UNHCR, February 2023). From 2021–22, 21 501 individuals voluntarily repatriated from Mantapala settlement to southeastern areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (UNHCR, January 2023).

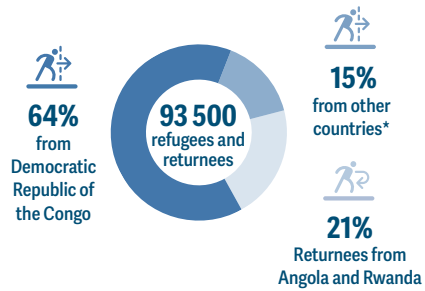
A Standardised Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) 2021 analysis found that 40 percent of households

Numbers of people by phase of acute food insecurity, 2018–2023



Source: Zambia IPC TWG.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees



* including Burundi, Somalia and Rwanda.

Source: UNHCR, October 2022.

in the three settlements had poor food consumption (46 percent in Meheba) and 36 percent had borderline food consumption. Poor infant and young child-feeding practices are key drivers of malnutrition among refugee children. Wasting (5 percent) in children under 5 years was a medium level of prevalence, but stunting prevalence was very high at more than 30 percent in Meheba and Mantapala. Exclusive breastfeeding levels were just 20 percent in Mantapala, 38.5 percent in Mayukwayukwa and 50 percent in Meheba. Anaemia levels were a severe public health concern (>40 percent) among both children aged under 5 years and among women of reproductive age. Disease contributes to malnutrition in the settlements (SENS, 2021).

NUTRITION



Based on data from 2020, the prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years was 4 percent, which is 'low' according to WHO classification. Around 140 500 children were severely wasted. The prevalence of stunting remained high at 32 percent (UNICEF, 2020).

As of 2021, HIV prevalence among adults aged 15–49 years was 10 percent, specifically 13.2 percent of women and 6.3 percent of men (Zambia Statistics Agency et al, 2022).

Drivers of undernutrition



Inadequate maternal and child-feeding practices Micronutrient deficiencies and low dietary diversity remain the key nutrition challenges in Zambia in 2022 (UNICEF, 2022). About 32 percent of women of reproductive age and 55 percent of children aged 6–59 months were anaemic (WHO, 2019), indicating moderate and severe levels respectively based on WHO anaemia classifications. Only 12 percent of children aged 6–23 months received the Minimum Acceptable Diet, while nearly 70 percent of children under 6 months were exclusively breastfed (UNICEF, 2020).



Food insecurity and lack of access to healthy diets If not immediately addressed, the acute food insecurity situation – linked to poverty, macroeconomic instability and exposure to climatic shocks – could drive up the prevalence of acute malnutrition (IPC, 2022).



Poor household environment In 2020, about 65 percent of households had access to basic drinking water services, falling to 25 percent in the rural population.