IPC
Integrated Food Security **P**hase **C**lassification
Evidence and Standards for Better Food Security and Nutrition Decisions

NAMIBIA

FLOODING, POOR RAINFALL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS FROM COVID-19 MEASURES DRIVE FOOD INSECURITY IN NAMIBIA.

IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS
July 2020 – March 2021

Issued in September 2020

CURRENT JULY - SEPTEMBER 2020

428,000

17% of the population analysed

People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+)

IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION

Phase 5	0	People in Catastrophe
Phase 4	14,000	People in Emergency
Phase 3	414,000	People in Crisis
Phase 2	744,000	People in Stressed
Phase 1	1,287,000	People in food security

PROJECTION OCTOBER 2020 - MARCH 2021

441,000

20% of the population analysed

People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+)

IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION

Phase 5	0	People in Catastrophe
Phase 4	14,000	People in Emergency
Phase 3	426,000	People in Crisis
Phase 2	651,000	People in Stressed
Phase 1	1,165,000	People in food security

Overview

In the current period (July – September 2020), around 428,000 people (17% of the population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) or worse, including around 14,000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This population requires urgent humanitarian action in order to reduce food gaps, protect and restore livelihoods and prevent acute malnutrition.

The regions of Kunene, Erongo, Khomas, Ohangwena, Kavango West, Omaheke and Zambezi are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) while the remaining seven analysed regions are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2). The main drivers of acute food insecurity in the country are: prolonged dry spells, flooding and loss of income due to impacts of COVID-19 control measures on livelihoods.

In the projected period (October 2020 to March 2021), around 441,000 people are expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) or worse. The region of Erongo was not analysed during this period; out of the 14 regions in the country, Erongo was the only one under lockdown due to COVID-19, therefore, no assessments could be conducted.

During the projected period, the regions of Kunene, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango West, Otjozondjupa, Khomas, Omaheke, Zambezi are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), while the rest of the analysed regions remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2). The impact of COVID-19 mitigation measures will likely continue to put pressure on households' capacity to access food.

Key Drivers

Flooding
The northern and north-central regions were affected by flooding.

Poor rainfall
The north-west, central and southern regions were affected by poor rainfall in the first half of the season stretching to early February 2020.
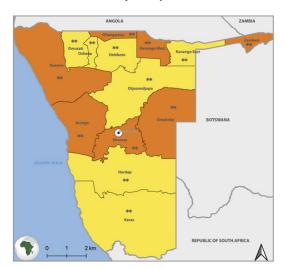
COVID-19
Although COVID-19 restrictions were only applicable to Erongo, households across the country registered job losses due to the pandemic.

Current Situation July – September 2020

Projected Situation October 2020 – March 2021

Key for the Map
IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine

- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Map Symbols
- Urban settlement classification

Evidence Level
- * Acceptable
- ** Medium
- *** High
- Scarce evidence due to limited or no humanitarian access

CURRENT SITUATION OVERVIEW (JULY - SEPTEMBER 2020)

In the current period (July – September 2020), around 428,000 people (17% of the population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) or worse, and require urgent humanitarian action to reduce food gaps, protect and restore livelihoods and prevent acute malnutrition.

The regions of Kunene, Erongo, Khomas, Ohangwena, Kavango West, Omaheke, and Zambezi are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), while the remaining seven analysed districts are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2).
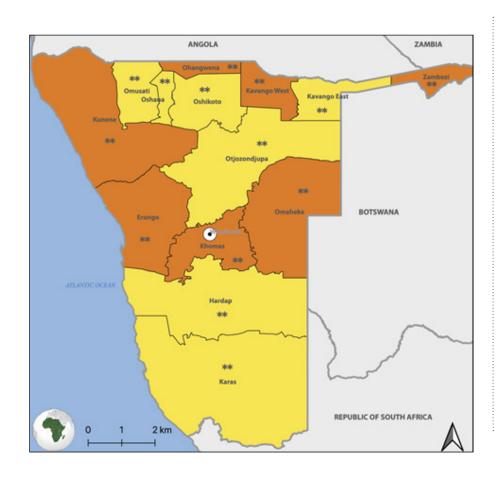
Despite a delay in the onset of the 2019/2020-rainfall season, good conditions were reported in the current period, resulting in normal-to-above-normal rainfall in most parts of the country. Crop estimates indicate a considerable improvement in production, with cereal increasing by at least 180% compared to 2018/2019 agriculture production, and 33% above the 5-year average. The 2018/2019-rainfall season was extremely poor. Severe drought conditions affected the whole country resulting in agricultural production losses and water shortages for human consumption, livestock, and industrial use.

After the improved rainfall in most parts of the country, grazing and water supply improved greatly, except in a few areas in the north-west, central and southern regions, which were affected by poor rainfall performance in the first half of the season stretching to early February 2020. However, the northeast, particularly the Zambezi region, suffered excessive rainfall, resulting in flooding. Furthermore, the north-central regions, especially Omusati, Oshana, the western part of Ohangwena, and the extreme southwestern part of Oshikoto were also affected by flooding as a result of heavy rains received in the southern part of Angola.

Although the lean season in 2019 started earlier due to drought conditions in 2018/2019, 13% of households were employing Emergency coping strategies in October 2019 compared to 14% in 2020. The highest proportion of households employing Emergency coping strategies in 2020 was in the Kunene region at 30.8%. The lowest proportion was in Omusati at 2.4%. The Kunene region was adversely affected by drought conditions during the 2018/2019 agriculture season, as well as the impact of COVID-19 measures on tourism; a major source of income for the majority of households who sell crafts and work in conservancies. The Kunene region has the highest number of conservancies in Namibia, however, due to the closure of lodges because of COVID-19, most households in this region lost income. Households from Kunene who rely on income from craft sales could not transport and sell their wares in Erongo, one of their major craft markets, due to the COVID-19-induced lockdown in the region. In 2019, the region with the highest proportion of households employing Emergency coping strategies was Zambezi at 22%, while the region with the lowest rate was Omaheke at 5.9%. Households with poor diets, indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) or worse were 3.3% in 2019 compared with 0.8% in 2020. Meanwhile, those with a dietary score indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) were 3.1% in 2019 compared with 2.1% in 2020. Households with a reduced Coping Strategy Index indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) were 24.1% in 2020 compared with 24.9% in 2019.

The government, through the Ministry of Finance, introduced a stimulus and relief package amounting to N$8.1 billion, directed at formal and informal businesses in sectors that were directly affected by COVID-19 lockdown measures, as well as households, to mitigate the negative impact on incomes and livelihoods. To ensure the affordability of staple foods (white maize and pearl millet) in the country, the National Agronomic Board (NAB) reduced the producers' floor price for white maize grain by N$140 per ton. Millers agreed to reduce un-sifted maize meal prices by N$200 per metric tonne to provide relief to households that rely on purchases. Due to slightly cheaper input costs for pearl millet production, the NAB also reduced the price for pearl millet from N$5,609 per metric tonne to the current N$4,988.49 per metric tonne. Additionally, the NAB resolved to donate N$1.1 million as a relief for purchasing food items for the vulnerable groups in the country since the lockdown measures were enforced.

CURRENT SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (July - September 2020)

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

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Map Symbols
- Urban settlement classification

Evidence Level
- * Acceptable
- ** Medium
- *** High
- Scarce evidence due to limited or no humanitarian access

Region	Population analysed	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
		#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Erongo	202,300	70,805	35	91,035	45	40,460	20	0	0	0	0	3	40,460	20
Hardap	91,900	45,950	50	32,165	35	13,785	15	0	0	0	0	2	13,785	15
Karas	90,900	45,450	50	36,360	40	9,090	10	0	0	0	0	2	9,090	10
Kavango East	155,700	70,065	45	62,280	40	23,355	15	0	0	0	0	2	23,355	15
Kavango west	91,100	50,105	55	22,775	25	18,220	20	0	0	0	0	3	18,220	20
Khomas	463,800	185,520	40	162,330	35	115,950	25	0	0	0	0	3	115,950	25
Kunene	104,900	52,450	50	20,980	20	20,980	20	10,490	10	0	0	3	31,470	30
Ohangwena	262,700	131,350	50	78,810	30	52,540	20	0	0	0	0	3	52,540	20
Omaheke	76,200	45,720	60	15,240	20	11,430	15	3,810	5	0	0	3	15,240	20
Omusati	254,500	203,600	80	38,175	15	12,725	5	0	0	0	0	2	12,725	5
Oshana	197,300	118,380	60	59,190	30	19,730	10	0	0	0	0	2	19,730	10
Oshikoto	203,500	122,100	60	50,875	25	30,525	15	0	0	0	0	2	30,525	15
Otjozondjupa	160,100	88,055	55	48,030	30	24,015	15	0	0	0	0	2	24,015	15
Zambezi	104,000	57,200	55	26,000	25	20,800	20	0	0	0	0	3	20,800	20
Grand Total	**2,458,900**	**1,286,750**	**52**	**744,245**	**30**	**413,605**	**17**	**14,300**	**1**	**0**	**0**		**427,905**	**17**

Note: A population in Phase 3+ does not necessarily reflect the full population in need of urgent action. This is because some households may be in Phase 2 or even 1 but only because of receipt of assistance, and thus, they may be in need of continued action.

PROJECTED SITUATION OVERVIEW (October 2020 - March 2021)

In the projected period (October 2020 to March 2021), around 441,000 people (20% of the analysed population) are expected to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

During this period, the regions of Kunene, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango West, Otjozondjupa, Khomas, Omaheke, Zambezi are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), while the rest of the analysed regions remain in Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

The projected period coincides with Namibia's lean season, when households are expected to deplete their own food stocks and rely more heavily on markets. Food availability in the markets is expected to be stable due to increased production in neighbouring South Africa, as well as government subsidies. The government of Namibia is expected to continue its subsidy programme on the prices of cereals, which will ensure prices remain stable and lower than the previous year. However, household ability to purchase food will be hampered by income losses due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Although the government announced a relief and stimulus package in response to COVID-19, the impact from the pandemic will continue to put pressure on households' capacity to access food. COVID-19 restrictions will likely continue to affect the majority of households in Namibia, especially in the northern parts of the country where people rely on making and selling crafts, as well as working in conservancies.

Livestock conditions are expected to be good as pastures and water for livestock are expected to be available throughout the projected period, resulting in better prices for households that rely on livestock sales for food.

Out of the 14 regions in Namibia, the Erongo region was not analysed during the projected period due to a lack of data. Data collection could not be undertaken in Erongo because of COVID-19 movement restrictions; the only region in the country with lockdown constraints. As a result, data from 2019 was used to classify the current period for the region, considering the data was less than one year old. However, a projection could not be completed as per IPC protocols since the outcome evidence can be no more than 12 months old for the duration of the projection period.
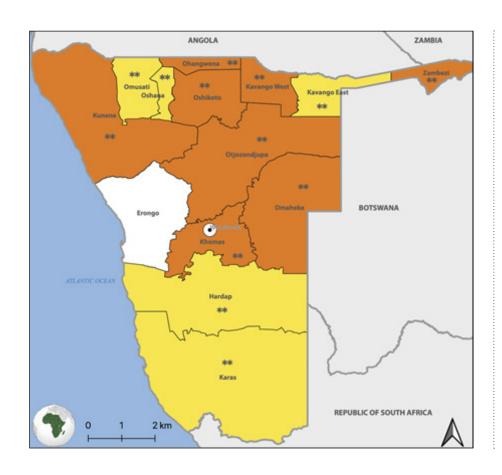
COVID-19 mitigation measures have had major impacts on the income levels of households in Namibia and are a major driver of food insecurity. Although movement restrictions were only implemented in the Erongo region, job losses were reported across the country. Among the most impacted sectors was tourism, particularly in the northern regions that rely on the sale of crafts and other tourism-related activities. In the projected period, there is an expectation that COVID-19 will continue to impact income levels. As international travel is expected to remain low, the tourism sector will continue to be impacted.

Key Assumptions for the projected period

• Labour Opportunities: Rural households will have increased casual labour opportunities due to forecasted above normal 2020/2021 rainfall season.

• Food prices: Cereal prices are expected to remain stable and lower than last year following a government subsidy programme.

• Food availability is expected to remain stable throughout the projected period in all regions due to the stable supply of food imports and increased production from South Africa.

• Markets are expected to remain stocked and functional.

• Seasonal Forecast: The Climate Prediction Centre (CPC) and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) forecasts an above average 2020/2021 rainfall season which might result in flooding in southern areas of the country.

• Pastures and water for livestock: With the forecasted above-average rainfall season, pastures and water for livestock are expected to be available and of good quality ensuring good livestock body conditions.

• Livestock Diseases: There will be a decrease of livestock diseases as pastures will be readily available and will limit interaction with wild animals.

• COVID-19 Impact: Labour opportunities and rates will likely be below normal at the national level due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Poor households that rely on crafts sales will realize depressed incomes due to limited tourism in the country.

PROJECTED SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (Oct 2020 – March 2021)

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

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Map Symbols
⊙ Urban settlement classification

Evidence Level
* Acceptable
** Medium
*** High
Scarce evidence due to limited or no humanitarian access

Region	Population analysed	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
		#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Erongo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Hardap	91,900	45,950	50	32,165	35	13,785	15	0	0	0	0	2	13,785	15
Karas	90,900	45,450	50	36,360	40	9,090	10	0	0	0	0	2	9,090	10
Kavango East	155,700	70,065	45	62,280	40	23,355	15	0	0	0	0	2	23,355	15
Kavango West	91,100	50,105	55	22,775	25	18,220	20	0	0	0	0	3	18,220	20
Khomas	463,800	185,520	40	139,140	30	139,140	30	0	0	0	0	3	139,140	30
Kunene	104,900	52,450	50	20,980	20	20,980	20	10,490	10	0	0	3	31,470	30
Ohangwena	262,700	131,350	50	78,810	30	52,540	20	0	0	0	0	3	52,540	20
Omaheke	76,200	41,910	55	15,240	20	15,240	20	3,810	5	0	0	3	19,050	25
Omusati	254,100	190,575	75	50,820	20	12,705	5	0	0	0	0	2	12,705	5
Oshana	197,300	118,380	60	59,190	30	19,730	10	0	0	0	0	2	19,730	10
Oshikoto	203,500	111,925	55	50,875	25	40,700	20	0	0	0	0	3	40,700	20
Otjozondjupa	160,100	64,040	40	56,035	35	40,025	25	0	0	0	0	3	40,025	25
Zambezi	104,000	57,200	55	26,000	25	20,800	20	0	0	0	0	3	20,800	20
Total	**2,256,200**	**1,164,920**	**52**	**650,670**	**29**	**426,310**	**19**	**14,300**	**1**	**0**	**0**		**440,610**	**20**

Note: A population in Phase 3+ does not necessarily reflect the full population in need of urgent action. This is because some households may be in Phase 2 or even 1 but only because of receipt of assistance, and thus, they may be in need of continued action.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Response Priorities

- Introduce drought-tolerant crop varieties to help reduce vulnerability to drought.
- Develop water management strategies, including irrigation and water harvesting technologies.
- Provide livestock support to households that rely on livestock sales for food by subsidizing the production of supplemental animal feed, which will also reduce the loss of livestock due to drought.
- Promotion of resilience-building initiatives, such as climate-smart agriculture. Create early warning systems to provide timely information to farmers.
- Incorporate disaster risk reduction and management in all government programmes, such as work for agricultural assets programmes.
- Increase community social protection programmes.
- Support livelihood and income diversification.
- Improve human land-use management to reduce land degradation and desertification.

Risk factors to monitor

- There is a need to monitor all risk factors and other causes of food insecurity due to the unpredictable effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With the sluggish economies across the globe, monitoring market prices will be key as the majority of the citizens are dependent on markets for all food items except cereals.
- There is a need to monitor rainfall performance since the majority of crop-producing regions are dependent on rain-fed agriculture, therefore, rainfall becomes key to their production chain. Monitor onset, coverage, and dry spells in order to estimate the next harvest/production.
- Market prices for basic commodities.
- Crop pests and diseases.
- Animal diseases and prices for animal medications.
- COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The Namibia Vulnerability Committee (NamVAC) led the data collection exercise through the Directorate Disaster Risk Management in the Office of the Prime Minister. The sample was designed by the Namibia Statistics Agency, and it was representative at the regional level and included both peri-urban and rural households. The enumeration team comprised of employees from Regional Councils and were trained by the NamVAC Technical Team. Data was collected using ODK loaded questionnaires on tablet devices and collected from 333 clusters across the country. The analysis was done by a team of representatives from each Regional Council and local authorities, including National NamVAC Technical Team members (WFP, FAO, Namibia Red Cross, National Statistics Agency, and Government Departments). The IPC training and analysis incorporated both virtual and face-to-face participation and was led by the SADC IPC Unit. The government and other development partners were meeting face-to-face in Namibia while GSU support was provided virtually.

Sources

The assessment NamVAC provided the bulk of the evidence used in the analysis, although there were also other sources of evidence, such as: agriculture production from the Ministry of Agriculture, prices from NSA, WFP, and reports provided by Regional Councils. Evidence also came from the Social Protection Information and response reports by Regional Councils.

Limitations of the analysis

Data collection could not be undertaken in the Erongo region due to COVID-19 movement restrictions. As a result, data from 2019 was used to classify the current period for the region, considering the data was less than one year old. However, a projection could not be completed as per IPC protocols since the outcome evidence can be no more than 12 months old for the duration of the projection period.

Acute Food Insecurity Phase name and description

Phase 1 None/Minimal	Phase 2 Stressed	Phase 3 Crisis	Phase 4 Emergency	Phase 5 Catastrophe/ Famine
Households are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income.	Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies.	Households either: • have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; **or** • are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies.	Households either: • have large food consumption gaps that are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; **or** • are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation	Households have an extreme lack of food and/or other basic needs even after full employment of coping strategies. Starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical acute malnutrition levels are evident. For famine classification, area needs to have extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality.)

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

Obert M Mutabani

IPC Country Coordinator
Obert.Mutabani@opm.gov.na

IPC Global Support Unit
www.ipcinfo.org

This analysis has been conducted under the patronage of the Office of The Prime Minister. It has benefited from the technical and financial support of UNFAO, UNWFP and other stakeholders.

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: