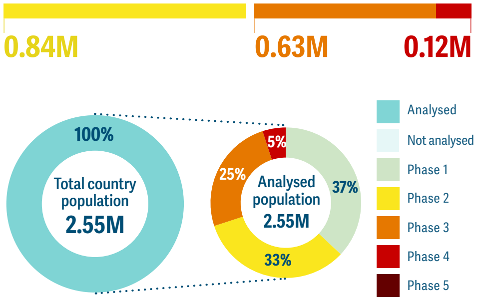
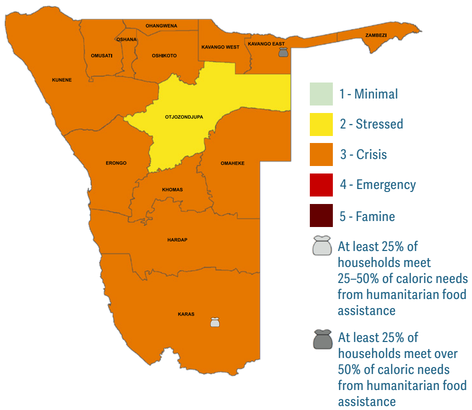
Namibia

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022

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



IPC acute food insecurity situation, December 2021–March 2022



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

Source: Namibia IPC TWG, December 2021.

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 percent of the country's population. The 70 percent 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 percent). 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 the 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.

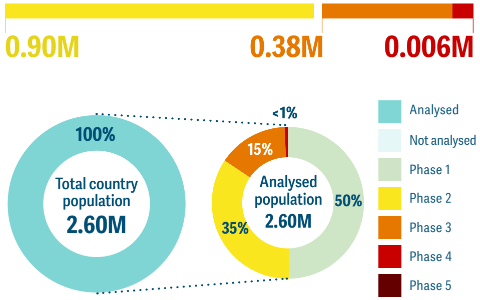
Economic growth is forecast to slow in 2023, with adverse implications for employment and incomes while high food prices are also expected to diminish vulnerable households' purchasing power (FAO, February 2023). Above average production is anticipated in South Africa, which may increase market supply (IPC, 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.

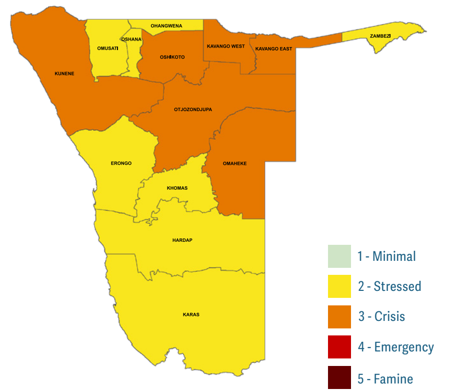
Following a late start of seasonal rains, precipitation amounts increased from December 2022, fostering an improvement in vegetation conditions in January. The heavy rains also caused localized flooding in northern Namibia when crops were in germination and emergence stages, a period when they are particularly susceptible to flood damage (FAO, March 2023).

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PROJECTION 2023

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



Projected IPC acute food insecurity situation, January–March 2023



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Source: Namibia IPC TWG, February 2023.