

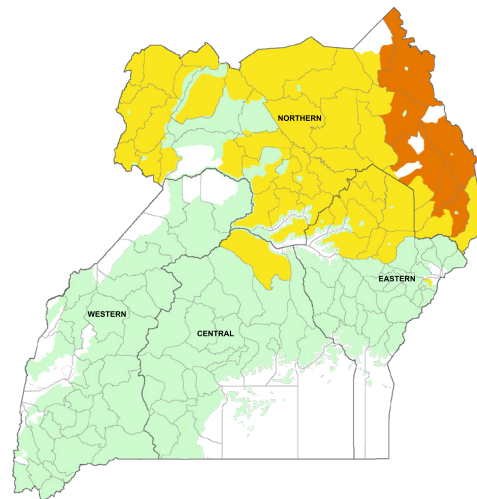
# Uganda

## ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022

 **2.3M** people or **5%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, **July–August 2022**

Source: FEWS NET, June 2022.


### IPC acute food insecurity situation, July–August 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: FEWS NET, June 2022.

## Food crisis overview

 At 2.3 million in July–August 2022, the number of people facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) was among the highest estimated in Uganda over the previous seven years. Consecutive seasons of below-average harvests, compounded by high food prices, were the main drivers of the acute food insecurity situation (FEWS NET, June 2022).

Following consecutive seasons of below-average harvests, high levels of acute food insecurity were especially prevalent in north-eastern Karamoja, Teso subregion, and in northern areas of the country.

Refugees, mainly from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, were among the country's most acutely food-insecure, as limited income and diminished coping capacity exacerbated their vulnerabilities.

### Acute food insecurity projected to persist at similar levels in 2023


In the projection period, the situation is not expected to improve at national level, with the estimated number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity ranging between 2–2.5 million in March–May 2023 (FEWS NET, January 2023), mostly due to below-average rainfall over several cropping areas and economic shocks. Even with humanitarian assistance, increasing numbers of refugees are estimated to face IPC Phase 3 or worse (FEWS NET, June 2022).

### Acute food insecurity since 2016

Over the seven years of the GRFC's existence, Uganda has been identified as a major food crisis with over 1 million people in IPC Phase 3 or above. The differing analysis coverage and data sources challenge comparisons over time. The highest number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above in the history of the GRFC was 2.6 million in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, even though the analysis only covered the food insecurity hotspots, accounting for

25 percent of the country population (Karamoja, urban areas, refugee populations and their host communities), while in other years analyses covered at least 87 percent of the population. Since 2020, the number has remained above the 2-million mark, indicating continued fragility of the food security situation. The proportion of the population facing high levels of acute food insecurity in some areas has continued to increase since 2020.

## Drivers of the crisis, 2022–23


 **Weather extremes** In bimodal rainfall areas covering most of the country except the Karamoja region, the March–June 2022 first season rains performed poorly, characterized by a 30–40 day delayed onset, erratic distribution and severe precipitation deficits, especially in northern areas. The insufficient rains significantly constrained crop yields, resulting in 30–50 percent below five-year average crop production and a third consecutive season of poor harvests (FEWS NET, June 2022). According to FAO's Agricultural Stress Index, as of mid-June, severe drought conditions affected more than 85 percent of the cropland in the Central, Eastern and Northern districts (FAO-GIEWS, October 2022).

In July, unseasonal torrential rains in the Eastern and Northern areas triggered landslides and flash floods that affected over 12 000 people and resulted in loss of lives, damage to infrastructure and localized crop losses (FAO-GIEWS, October 2022).

Improved late-season rains in December resulted in a partial crop recovery, and the second season harvest performed better than the first but was still estimated to be below average (FEWS NET, December 2022).

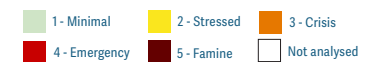
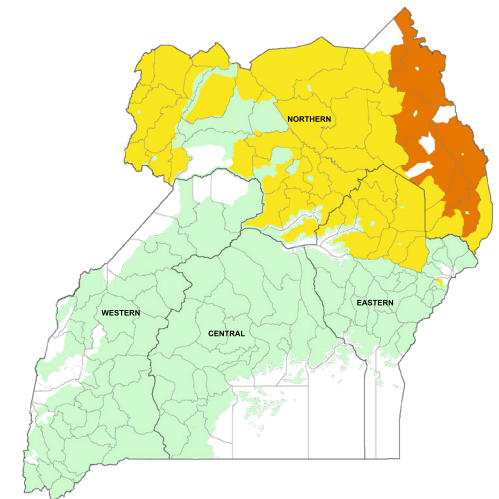
Unfavourable weather conditions prevailed in the unimodal rainfall, agropastoral Karamoja region where the April–September 2022 seasonal rains started late and were significantly below average and erratic, especially between May and July, resulting in prolonged dry spells (FAO-GIEWS, October 2022). Crop production for the late 2022 harvest was estimated to be 50–80 percent below

## ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PROJECTION 2023

 **2.0–2.5M** people or **4–5%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above, **February–May 2023**

Source: FEWS NET, February 2023.

### Projected IPC acute food insecurity situation, March–May 2023



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Source: FEWS NET, February 2023.

average (FEWS NET, January 2023), marking the fourth consecutive season of reduced harvests in the subregion (FAO-GIEWS, October 2022).

Inadequate pasture regeneration and water-source recharge led to below-average livestock body conditions and productivity both in the cattle corridor area and in the Karamoja region (FEWS NET, July 2022).

**Economic shocks** Food prices were elevated across the country due to tight market availability and sustained local demand, as households relied more on the market for food due to lower stocks at the household level caused by consecutive poor harvests. Above-average export demand, mainly from Kenya where crop production was also reduced, and high fuel prices, underpinned by the ripple effects of the war in Ukraine, exerted additional pressure on food prices (FEWS NET, August 2022; FAO-GIEWS, October 2022).

The annual inflation rate, estimated at 10 percent in December 2022, has been increasing since early 2022, underpinned by increasing food and fuel prices. Food inflation was estimated in December 2022 at 23 percent, compared with 5.3 percent in January. In December 2022, average national prices of beans, matooke cooking bananas, cassava flour and maize flour were between 23 percent and 84 percent higher on a yearly basis (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, December 2022).

In Karamoja, incomes were below average for most households due to the below-normal crop production season, ongoing insecurity and rising inflation, all of which constrained typical livelihood activities and reduced purchasing power. Firewood collection and charcoal production – which are typically used by poor households to fill income gaps during the lean season – were constrained in some areas due to insecurity, and prices of charcoal and firewood were below average in many markets, further constraining incomes (FEWS NET, August 2022).

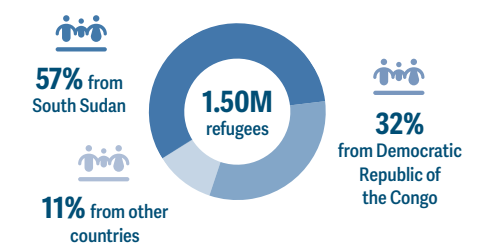
**Conflict/insecurity** A volatile security situation in North Kivu and Ituri provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in South Sudan resulted in over 144 600 new refugees and asylum-seekers arriving in the country during 2022 (UNHCR, March 2023), putting a strain on already limited

resources for humanitarian assistance. Concurrently, WFP cut already partial food rations to 60–70% of the food basket of 2100 kilocalories per person per day, which forced many refugees to resort increasingly to negative coping strategies, including child labour and early marriage (ECHO, January 2023).

Localized cattle raid-related conflict as well as intercommunal clashes over resources and sporadic attacks by armed gunmen in Karamoja spread to Teso subregion, causing population displacement and the establishment of mini IDP camps in Kapelebyong district (IPC, November 2022). Insecurity in Karamoja constrained households' access to farmlands and grazing areas, resulting in reduced crop and livestock production (FEWS NET, June 2022).

**DISPLACEMENT**

**Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa**



Source: UNHCR, December 2022, UNHCR January 2023.

**Refugees** Uganda hosts 1.5 million refugees, the largest refugee population in Africa, mainly from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The majority live in 13 settlements in the West Nile subregion, and southern and midwestern regions, while 8 percent live in urban areas, particularly Kampala (UNHCR, December 2022).

Refugees in Uganda are dependent on food aid assistance, but rations were cut due to underfunding in 2021. According to the WFP/UNHCR Food Security and Nutrition Assessment 2022 in 13 refugee settlements as well as host districts, refugees living without food assistance, surviving by themselves in Kampala, had

better nutrition status than those in the settlements (UNHCR and WFP, June 2022).

According to an IPC acute malnutrition analysis in refugee settlements, between February 2022–January 2023, an estimated 36 600 children aged 6–59 months suffered wasting across all refugee settlements, with 8 600 severely wasted. Additionally, 4 200 pregnant and lactating women among the refugee population were acutely malnourished (IPC, November 2022).

During February–July 2022, Adjumani – the largest settlement, hosting around 237 800 refugees – was classified as in a Serious situation (IPC AMN Phase 3), with a wasting prevalence of 10.5 percent. Six others were classified as in Alert (IPC AMN Phase 2), and the rest in Acceptable (IPC AMN Phase 1) (IPC, November 2022).

The stunting prevalence ranged from 35–48 percent ('very high') in five settlements in western districts, and was 'high' in three settlements in the West Nile subregion (UNHCR and WFP, June 2022).

**Drivers of undernutrition for refugees**

**Inadequate maternal and child-feeding practices** Only 8.5 percent of children aged 6–23 months received a Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) across the refugee settlements, based on results from the December 2020 Food Security and Nutrition Assessment (FSNA).

Exclusive breastfeeding during the first 6 months reduced from 62 percent in 2021 to 60 percent, while mixed feeding practices for infants were rampant among refugee mothers with premature introduction of solid, semi-solid and soft foods (IPC, November 2022).

High levels of anaemia among children aged 6–59 months are a major public health concern at 45 percent. The 'moderate' anaemia prevalence among pregnant and lactating women (32 percent) is a contributing factor to low birth weight infants, who are then more prone to acute malnutrition. Only 28.2 percent of the women in refugee settlements were able to consume five or more food groups in a day (IPC, November 2022).

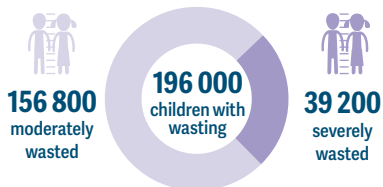
**High prevalence of infectious diseases** Malaria and acute respiratory infection cases are high in refugee settlements and in host communities, which places a disease burden on the children and strains the health services, contributing to malnutrition. From the most recent FSNA, 76.3 percent of children in the settlements and 77.1 percent of those in host communities were found to have tested positive for malaria in the two weeks preceding the survey (IPC, November 2022).

**Food insecurity and lack of access to healthy diets** Access to a nutritious, iron-rich diet is a challenge for refugees living in settlements. Most households do not have enough food from own production, and the high prices in local markets significantly limit their ability to meet the Minimum Expenditure Basket. According to WFP CARI, about 49 percent of the refugee population faced moderate acute food insecurity while another 6 percent faced severe food insecurity in 2022 (IPC, November 2022).

**Poor household environment** Although 94 percent of refugee households could access safe water sources, the per capita water use is still low, with only 33 percent able to use 20 or more litres of water per person per day. In almost 63 percent of refugee households, water for drinking is not treated before use (IPC, November 2022).

**NUTRITION**

**Number of children under 5 years old with wasting, February 2022–January 2023**



**22 300 pregnant and lactating women acutely malnourished, 2022**

Source: Uganda IPC TWG, May and November 2022.

According to IPC analyses in Karamoja, refugee settlements and refugee-hosting districts, around 196 000 children under 5 years old were suffering from wasting in 2022. Of them, around 36 600 were in refugee settlements and 67 900 in 12 refugee-hosting districts (IPC, November 2022). In Karamoja region, the number of children with wasting increased from 56 600 to 91 600 between the 2021 and 2022 lean seasons. The number of children with severe wasting in Karamoja more than doubled from 10 300 to 23 000 (IPC July 2021; IPC, May 2022).

In February–July 2022, two of nine districts in Karamoja were classified as in Critical (IPC AMN Phase 4) – up from one during the 2021 lean season – with the wasting prevalence among children under 5 years old reaching 22 percent in Moroto and 19.8 percent in Kaabong. Four districts were classified as in Serious (IPC AMN Phase 3) with a wasting prevalence of around 14 percent (IPC May 2022). From August 2022–January 2023, wasting was projected to remain at similar levels (IPC May 2022).

Available data show no improvement in wasting among children in Karamoja in the last eight years. From 2015–2019, the wasting levels were 'high' each year (10–<15 percent). They improved to 9.7 percent in

2020 before increasing again to 10.7 percent in 2021 and then to 13.1 percent in 2022 (IPC, May 2022).

According to UNICEF, 2.4 million children are stunted (UNICEF, 2022).

**Drivers of undernutrition in Karamoja**

**Food insecurity and lack of access to healthy diets** Of the nine districts analysed, six were of concern in terms of both acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition, namely Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nabilatuk and Napak, with at least a classification of Crisis (IPC Phase 3) for acute food insecurity and Alert (IPC AMN Phase 2) for acute malnutrition. Overall, there was consistency and convergence between results from the analyses, demonstrating the link between the two dimensions (IPC, May 2022).

**Inadequate maternal and child-feeding practices** As women are the main breadwinners in Karamoja, high workloads and high levels of maternal alcoholism were leading causes of 'Extremely Critical' child-feeding practices (IPC, May 2022).

According to results from the FSNA from February–March 2022, just 1.8 percent of 6–23-month-old children received the MAD across Karamoja, ranging from 0 percent in Napak and Nakapiripirit districts to 8.6 percent in Amudat district. The remaining districts had fewer than 5 percent of children able to meet the minimum dietary requirements for growth and development (IPC, May 2022).

In 2021, at the national level, 10 percent of 6–23-month-old children received the MAD, which is considered 'Critical' (LSMS 2019–20). Exclusive breastfeeding rates for children aged 0–5 months were at an 'Alert' level of 61 percent in May 2022 in Karamoja region.

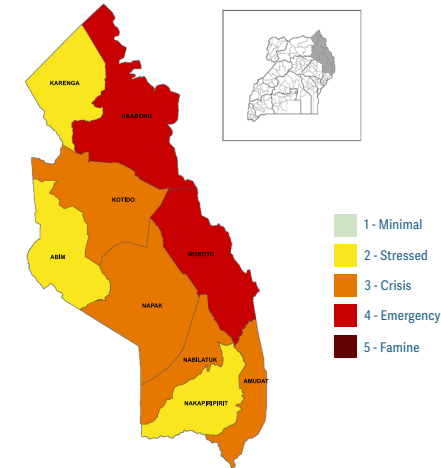
In 2022, anaemia prevalence for women of reproductive age was estimated nationally at 32.8 percent, a 'moderate' public health problem. In Karamoja region, 37 percent (a reduction from the 59 percent recorded in 2021 but still considered a 'severe' public health problem (WHO 2019)) of children aged under 5 were estimated to be anaemic, with the highest prevalence of children suffering from anaemia in Napak (52.5 percent), Amudat (51.5 percent) and Nakapiripirit (45.7 percent) districts (IPC, May 2022).

Only about 19 percent of women were able to consume an adequately diverse diet in Karamoja. The most affected districts in this regard were Napak (3.2 percent), Moroto (15.4 percent), Abim (11.5 percent) and Karenga (15 percent) (IPC, May 2022).

**Poor household environment** Low water availability at household level and poor access to improved sanitation facilities led to poor hygiene practices that exposed children to diarrhoea, dysentery and skin infections. Although 92 percent of households had access to safe water sources (FSNA, 2022), the per capita water use in Karamoja was found to be below the recommended WHO standard of 20 litres per person per day. Only 19 percent of households (30 percent in 2021) met this minimum water-use standard with average per capita use being 13.2 litres per person per day, most likely due to long distances and high queuing time, coupled with heavy female workload (IPC, May 2022).

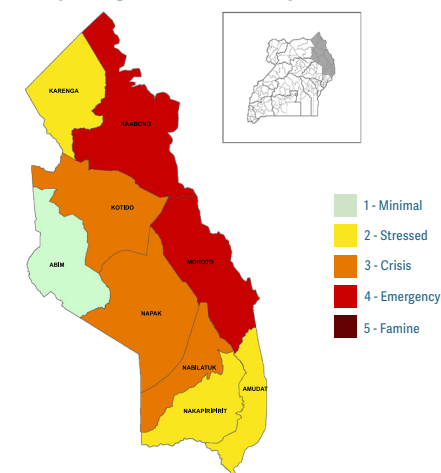
In 2022, access to improved sanitation facilities was still very low across the region. Open defecation stood at 56 percent. The worst-performing districts were Amudat, Moroto, Napak and Kotido, where open defecation ranged from 66–80 percent (IPC, May 2022).

**IPC acute malnutrition situation in Karamoja, February–July 2022**



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**Projected IPC acute malnutrition situation in Karamoja, August 2022–January 2023**



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