



MALAWI

HIGH LEVELS OF ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY CAUSED BY CLIMATE-RELATED SHOCKS, ECONOMIC DECLINE AND HIGH FOOD PRICES IN BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023 - MARCH 2024

Published on 18 August 2023

CURRENT ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2023

<p>3.0 M 15% of the population analysed</p> <p>People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above)</p> <p>IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION</p>	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4	0 People in Emergency
	Phase 3	3,021,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2	5,294,000 People Stressed
	Phase 1	10,747,000 People in food security

PROJECTED ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY OCTOBER 2023 - MARCH 2024

<p>4.4 M 22% of the population analysed</p> <p>People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above)</p> <p>IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION</p>	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4	266,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3	4,136,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2	6,164,000 People Stressed
	Phase 1	9,123,000 People in food security

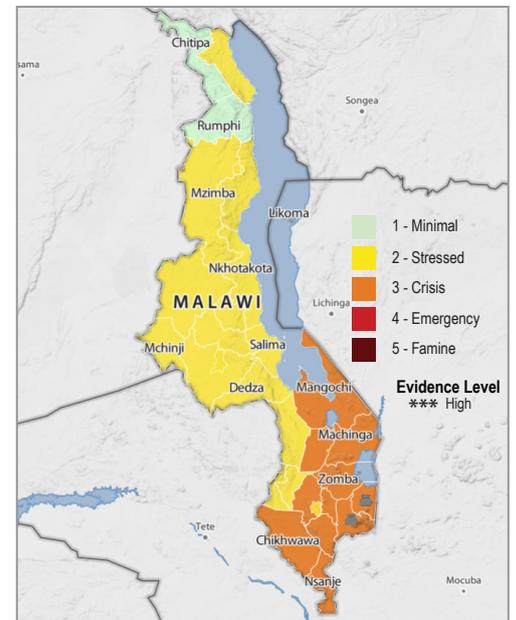
Overview

The 2023 IPC analysis for Malawi is indicative that 3 million people representing 15 percent of the total population are experiencing high acute food insecurity IPC Phase 3, Crisis, in 28 districts and four cities. This situation will prevail from June to September 2023 for the aforementioned population. Thus, immediate measures need to be taken to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.

An additional 5.9 million individuals are currently classified under IPC Phase 2, Stressed and necessitate intervention to mitigate disaster risks and protect their livelihoods. Eleven districts are classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis, these include: Balaka, Blantyre, Chikhwawa, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba. Key factors driving this situation are the various climatic shocks experienced throughout the district, mainly dry spells, cyclones and floods, leading to below average crop production; economic decline, including the effects of the war in Ukraine on fuel and commodity prices, the 25 percent devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha, high input prices, leading to high costs of production and the continued high food inflation leading to high food prices and low purchasing power.

The situation is expected to worsen during the period from October 2023 to March 2024. In this projected period, 4.4 million people, representing 22 percent of total Malawians in the country will be in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). These people will require humanitarian assistance to sustain livelihoods and mitigate food consumption gaps.

Current Situation June - September 2023



Key Drivers



Climate-Related Shocks:

Cyclone Freddy negatively impacted food security by causing crop loss, disrupting transportation and infrastructure, and displacing populations. These combined effects have contributed to decreased food availability, increased prices, and limited access to food, leading to heightened food insecurity in the affected areas.



High Staple Prices:

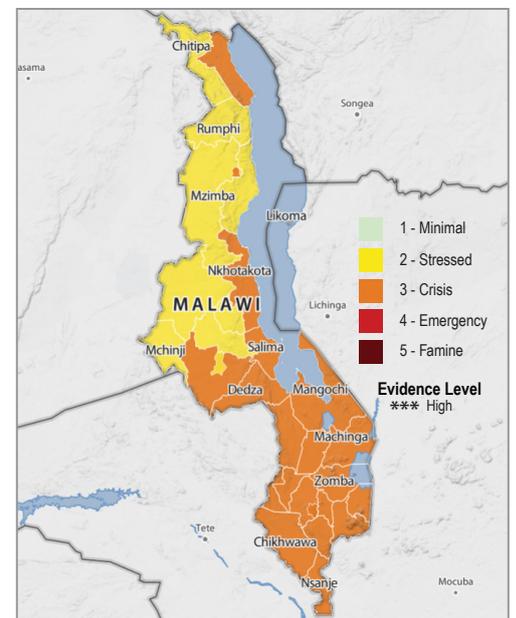
Households with limited financial resources are finding it increasingly challenging to purchase enough food to meet their dietary needs. The 2022 high cost of agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides has created a rebound effect on staple prices.



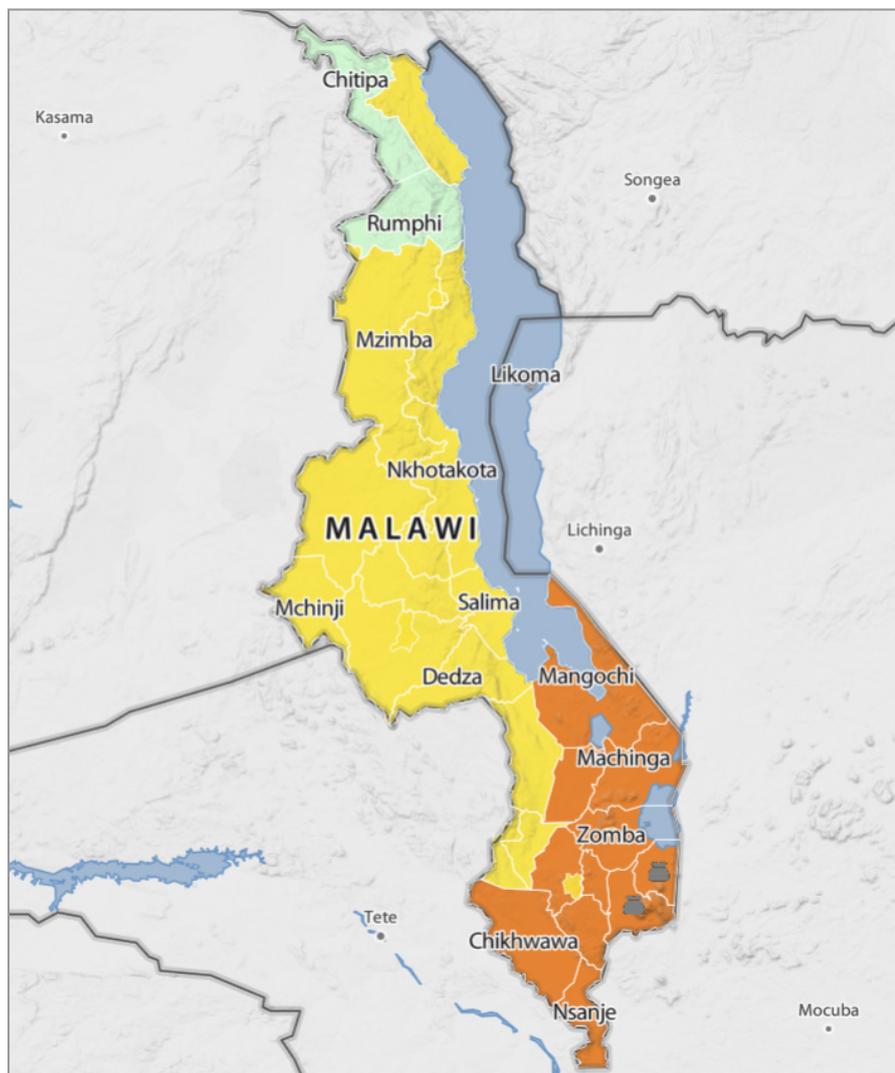
Economic Decline:

The country's ongoing economic instability, including forex shortages, high commodity prices, and inflation, is driving food insecurity, particularly in areas experiencing weather shocks. Additionally, the import cover is below the internationally accepted standard of below 3 months.

Projected Situation Oct 2023 - March 2024



CURRENT IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (JUNE – SEPTEMBER 2023)



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

Evidence Level
*** High



Population table for the current period: June – September 2023

District	Total population analysed*	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
		#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Balaka	504,000	252,000	50	151,000	30	101,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	101,000	20
Blantyre	509,000	229,000	50	178,000	35	102,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	102,000	20
Blantyre city	872,000	392,000	50	349,000	40	131,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	131,000	15
Chikhwawa	628,000	283,000	50	188,000	30	157,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	157,000	25
Chiradzulu	390,000	176,000	50	136,000	35	78,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	78,000	20
Chitipa	256,000	217,000	50	26,000	10	13,000	5	0	0	0	0	1	13,000	5
Dedza	928,000	464,000	50	325,000	35	139,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	139,000	15
Dowa	879,000	439,000	50	352,000	40	88,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	88,000	10
Karonga	406,000	183,000	50	162,000	40	61,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	61,000	15
Kasungu	950,000	475,000	50	332,000	35	143,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	143,000	15
Likoma	16,000	12,000	50	3,000	20	1,000	5	0	0	0	0	2	1,000	5
Lilongwe	1,831,000	915,000	50	641,000	35	275,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	275,000	15
Lilongwe city	1,163,000	931,000	50	174,000	15	58,000	5	0	0	0	0	2	58,000	5
Machinga	874,000	481,000	50	218,000	25	175,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	175,000	20
Mangochi	1,347,000	674,000	50	404,000	30	269,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	269,000	20
Mchinji	673,000	404,000	50	202,000	30	67,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	67,000	10
Mulanje	766,000	383,000	50	230,000	30	153,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	153,000	20
Mwanza	152,000	91,000	50	38,000	25	23,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	23,000	15
Mzimba	1,018,000	712,000	50	204,000	20	102,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	102,000	10
Mzuzu city	273,000	178,000	50	68,000	25	27,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	27,000	10
Neno	153,000	84,000	50	46,000	30	23,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	23,000	15
Nkhata bay	310,000	217,000	50	62,000	20	31,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	31,000	10
Nkhotakota	437,000	262,000	50	109,000	25	66,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	66,000	15
Nsanje	327,000	131,000	50	82,000	25	114,000	35	0	0	0	0	3	114,000	35
Ntcheu	756,000	453,000	50	227,000	30	76,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	76,000	10
Ntchisi	366,000	219,000	50	110,000	30	37,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	37,000	10
Phalombe	490,000	220,000	50	172,000	35	98,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	98,000	20
Rumphi	254,000	216,000	50	25,000	10	13,000	5	0	0	0	0	1	13,000	5
Salima	551,000	275,000	50	193,000	35	83,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	83,000	15
Thyolo	782,000	352,000	50	274,000	35	156,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	156,000	20
Zomba	714,000	357,000	50	214,000	30	143,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	143,000	20
Zomba city	117,000	70,000	50	29,000	25	18,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	18,000	15
Grand Total	19,692,000	10,747,000	50	5,924,000	30	3,021,000	15	0	0	0	0		3,021,000	15

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, therefore they may be in need of continued action. Marginal inconsistencies that may arise in the overall percentages of totals and grand totals are attributable to rounding.

CURRENT SITUATION OVERVIEW (JUNE – SEPTEMBER 2023)

From June to September 2023, only two districts will be in IPC Phase 1, Minimal meaning that many households in these areas are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income. These are Northern Region districts of Chitipa and Rumphi. Eleven districts are classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis, these include: Balaka, Blantyre, Chikhwawa, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba. The population of these districts is estimated at 3 million which implies that they will barely be able to meet their basic food requirements, as such they can only do so by depleting crucial livelihood assets or resorting to emergency measures for coping with the crisis. The analysis classified all cities in IPC Phase 2, Stressed meaning that the population in Blantyre city, Lilongwe city, Mzuzu City and Zomba City are consuming the bare minimal and are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies.

The primary factors contributing to the current state of stress are the heightened costs associated with the food basket. FEWS NET price data shows that in July, the average price range for maize staples spanned across nearly all monitored markets is 500 MWK to 615 MWK. Compared to the same period last year, maize prices were between 184 MWK to 250 MWK representing between 140 - 160 percent increase in the different cities.

The nation is currently grappling with a significant decrease in the output of its main staple crops, particularly in the southern region. Specifically, national maize production is estimated to be 6 to 7 percent lower than last year. This decline can be attributed to the detrimental impact of floods and destructive weather conditions triggered by tropical cyclones, coupled with limited availability of fertilizer for rural smallholder farmers.

The vast majority of the 3 million people in IPC Phase 3, Crisis are in rural areas that experienced a deficit in crop production due to climatic shock in the Southern Region, and low amount of rainfall in the Northern and Central regions. The Southern Region was faced with the effects of Cyclone Freddy which caused damage to household livelihoods. Crop production, however, was not as highly affected as anticipated. For these rural households, the level of stocks will remain low, making them to rely on the markets earlier than normal and for longer periods than usual for their food supply.

Urban Areas

Within the current period June to September 2023, a comprehensive analysis of the urban population, encompassing Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Zomba, and Blantyre cities shows that, out of the total of 2,425,000 individuals inhabiting these cities, a notable portion of approximately 234,000 people, roughly constituting 9 percent of the total urban population, find themselves grappling with the dire effects of acute food insecurity.

The situation in all four cities have been classified as IPC Phase 2, Stressed. This situation is prevailing due to increase in staple prices, greatly exacerbating the already precarious situation. The shortage of staple foods can be attributed to multiple factors, including decreased agricultural production and the adverse impact of inflation, which has considerably eroded the purchasing power of the population which largely depend on market for their food supply. Comparing agricultural yields to the previous year, it becomes apparent that the current year has witnessed a stark decline in production. This decline not only exacerbates the food crisis but also amplifies the strain on available resources and worsens the vulnerabilities faced by urban dwellers.

The war in Ukraine has had a far-reaching impact on the interconnected web of supply chains. This disruption has inevitably led to a substantial rise in prices, affecting critical commodities such as fuel, wheat products, cooking oil, agricultural inputs, and other essential provisions. As a result, the population, already burdened by limited access to affordable food, now faces the additional challenge of surging costs for basic necessities.

Humanitarian Food Assistance

At present, there is a lack of substantial humanitarian aid being received by the population classified as being in IPC Phase 3, Crisis in the targeted areas. The current population in IPC Phase 3, Crisis is not anticipated to receive any response from the government or key humanitarian assistance partners, as they have no plans in place for such intervention. In the current period from June to September 2023, commonly known as the post-harvest period, it is foreseen that the provision of humanitarian assistance which targeted households that were affected by the Tropical Cyclone Freddy and that was delayed in April and May but distributed in

Main Outcomes

Most Southern region districts in Malawi are currently IPC Phase 3, Crisis excluding Neno Mwanza and Blantyre City. The areas in IPC Phase 3 have low Food Consumption Scores (FCS), with a prevalence of poor FCS (indicative of the IPC Phase 3): highest is 47% in Nsanje district and lowest is 27% in Machinga district, the Nationwide FCS is pointing to IPC Phase 3 as 34% are in this phase.

21% of households consumed between three and four food groups in the 24 hours prior to the collection of data in June 2023 (Household Dietary Diversity Score indicative of IPC Phase 3). The rural areas of Lilongwe District have the highest population of 43% in IPC Phase 3 for the HDDS.

In the current period, the Household Hunger Scale indicates that approximately 20% of households in all the districts are classified under IPC Phase 3, Crisis.

Livelihood Coping Strategies (LCS) is indicating IPC Phase 3, Crisis that 17% are employing Crisis strategies.

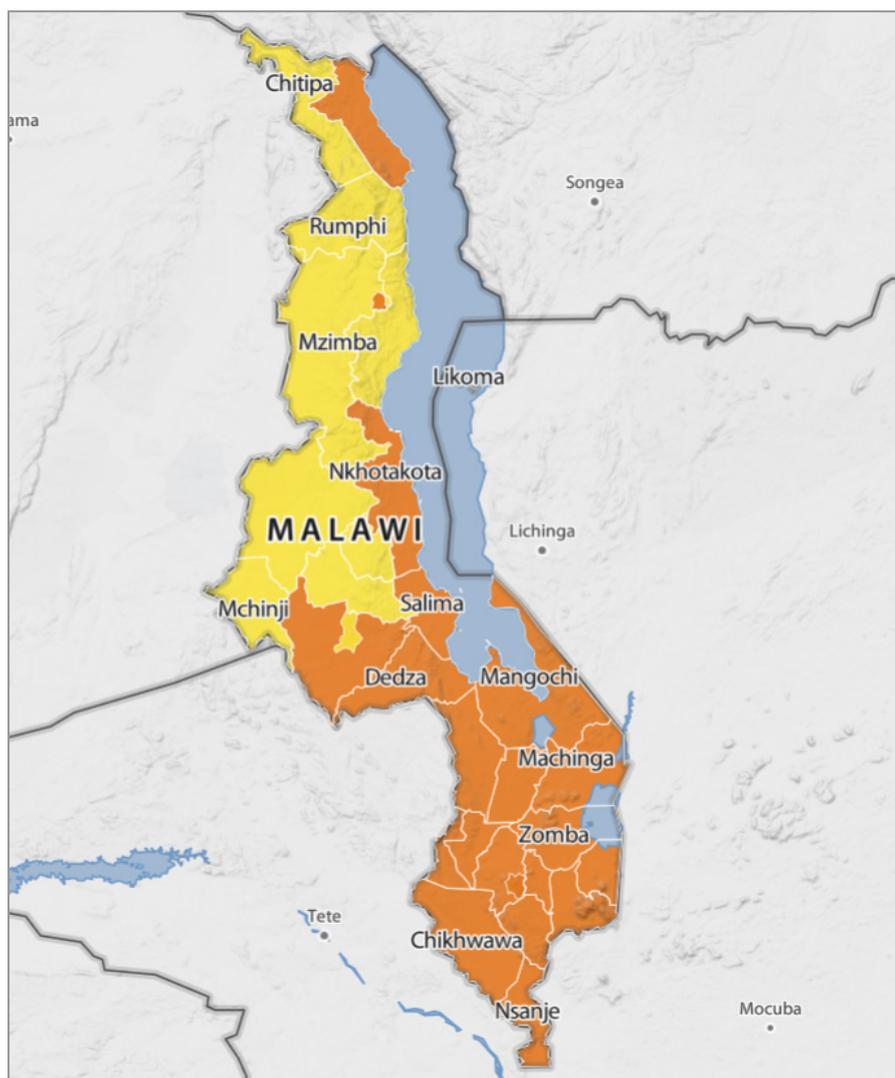
The reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) indicates that approximately 22% of the population is classified as indicative of IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse), reflecting a significant level of food insecurity.

The observed outcome indicators show higher values because the data collection occurred prior to the completion of the harvesting phase. Consequently, individuals had not yet commenced consuming from their own agricultural yields. This suggests that the overall food consumption during the current period is anticipated to be more favorable than what is initially reflected by the available indicators.

June will not be extended. There is no confirmation for humanitarian assistance during the projected period October 2023 – March 2024 currently. As households typically reap the benefits of their own agricultural production during this time, they are expected to depend on the yields they have harvested. Additionally, the reliance on social networks and community ties will play a significant role in meeting any additional needs or challenges that may arise during this period.

However, humanitarian food assistance must be implemented during the projected period, which spans from October 2023 to March 2024. During this timeframe, the anticipated response from humanitarian organizations is to provide crucial food assistance to the affected population. This intervention would aim to address the prevailing food security challenges and ensure the availability of sustenance for those in need.

PROJECTED IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (OCTOBER 2023 – MARCH 2024)



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Evidence Level
*** High

Population table for the projected period: October 2023 – March 2024

District	Total population analysed*	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
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Blantyre	509,000	204,000	40	153,000	30	127,000	25	25,000	5	0	0	3	152,000	30
Blantyre city	872,000	349,000	40	305,000	35	218,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	218,000	25
Chikhwawa	628,000	252,000	40	157,000	25	188,000	30	31,000	5	0	0	3	219,000	35
Chiradzulu	390,000	156,000	40	137,000	35	97,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	97,000	25
Chitipa	256,000	192,000	75	38,000	15	26,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	26,000	10
Dedza	928,000	417,000	45	325,000	35	186,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	186,000	20
Dowa	879,000	352,000	40	395,000	45	132,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	132,000	15
Karonga	406,000	142,000	35	183,000	45	81,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	81,000	20
Kasungu	950,000	427,000	45	380,000	40	143,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	143,000	15
Likoma	16,000	11,000	70	3,000	20	2,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	2,000	13
Lilongwe	1,831,000	824,000	45	641,000	35	366,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	366,000	20
Lilongwe city	1,163,000	815,000	70	174,000	15	174,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	174,000	15
Machinga	874,000	393,000	45	262,000	30	219,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	219,000	25
Mangochi	1,347,000	539,000	40	472,000	35	269,000	20	67,000	5	0	0	3	336,000	25
Mchinji	673,000	337,000	50	235,000	35	101,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	101,000	15
Mulanje	766,000	345,000	45	192,000	25	191,000	25	38,000	5	0	0	3	229,000	30
Mwanza	152,000	68,000	45	46,000	30	38,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	38,000	25
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Nsanje	327,000	98,000	30	98,000	30	115,000	35	16,000	5	0	0	3	130,000	40
Ntcheu	756,000	378,000	50	227,000	30	151,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	151,000	20
Ntchisi	366,000	183,000	50	128,000	35	55,000	15	0	0	0	0	2	55,000	15
Phalombe	490,000	147,000	30	171,000	35	147,000	30	25,000	5	0	0	3	172,000	35
Rumphi	254,000	204,000	80	25,000	10	25,000	10	0	0	0	0	2	25,000	10
Salima	551,000	248,000	45	138,000	25	165,000	30	0	0	0	0	3	165,000	30
Thyolo	782,000	235,000	30	313,000	40	195,000	25	39,000	5	0	0	3	235,000	30
Zomba	714,000	321,000	45	214,000	30	179,000	25	0	0	0	0	3	179,000	25
Zomba city	117,000	59,000	50	35,000	30	23,000	20	0	0	0	0	3	23,000	20
Grand Total	19,692,000	9,123,000	47	6,167,000	31	4,136,000	21	266,000	1	0	0		4,402,000	22

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, therefore they may be in need of continued action. Marginal inconsistencies that may arise in the overall percentages of totals and grand totals are attributable to rounding.



PROJECTED SITUATION OVERVIEW (OCTOBER 2023 – MARCH 2024)

Between October 2023 and March 2024, the food security situation is expected to deteriorate further, with 4.4 million people in Malawi expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above). The number of districts classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis is likely to increase from 11 to 22 out of 32 areas analysed among which three cities (Mzuzu, Zomba and Blantyre) that were in IPC Phase 2, Stressed in the current situation. Most of the people in IPC Phase 3, Crisis accounting for 3.9 million people, live in rural areas, while 470,000 reside in the four cities of Blantyre, Zomba, Lilongwe and Mzuzu. These households live in the areas characterized by low levels of production, multiple shocks including the tropical cyclones, pests and diseases, and are affected by the impacts of inflation, economic slow-down and war in Ukraine which is likely to continue in the projected period.

With a decrease in national maize production by 6 percent, the households' stocks level is likely to be significantly below average. The maize production decrease compared to the 5-year average was slight, ranging between 4 percent and 8 percent with the highest reductions occurring in the south. However, in some of the districts in the center and northern regions, production was slightly above the 5-year average. Households will face food gaps which are expected to be experienced in all the regions (Northern, Central and Southern) with most severe prospects in the southern region.

During the projected period (October 2023-March 2024), the prices are expected to trend significantly above the five-year average as urban and rural households will have depleted their own food stocks and face the increased impact of inflation. Although official crops estimates show slightly above average maize production compared to the 5-year average but lower than the production of the previous year, prices have remained significantly higher mostly due to the high costs of inputs and escalating global price trends. Maize prices are therefore expected to continue trending significantly above five-year average. The maximum projected price for maize is expected to be at MK965 per kilogram although it may be even higher in some markets. The above average prices will likely affect rural and urban households to provide unfavorable financial access to food during the projection period.

The food security situation in rural and urban areas is expected to deteriorate further due to low production of food staples coupled with expected high prices exacerbated by inflation and the impact of war in Ukraine.

Key Assumptions

Unstable macroeconomic conditions: The economic instability of the country is likely to worsen given the high inflation, shortage of forex coupled with inadequate import cover.

Seasonal performance: El Nino probability is above 90 percent; the country is thus likely to experience dry weather in the projected period which is likely to impact cereal production that will pose challenges to increased imports in the future.

Conflict: War in Ukraine will continue to disrupt the global supply chain resulting in high cost of agricultural inputs, fuel, cooking oil and wheat products. Hence increasing the cost of production for the irrigated crops during the next agricultural season.

Increase in transportation costs: the devaluation and depreciation of the Malawi Kwacha will continue to increase transportation costs for agricultural inputs and commodities produced and imported within and from neighboring countries.

Labour wage and opportunities: labour opportunities will likely to be normal with increased labour rates, however the rates will have less value due to increased prices and devaluation of the currency.

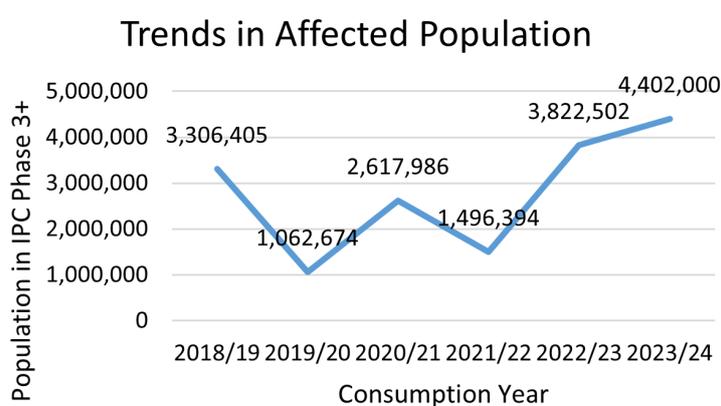
Food stocks: expected to be available on local markets at high prices.

Deteriorating nutrition and health status: It is expected that the impact of the Tropical Cyclone will compound nutrition and health conditions especially with dilapidated sanitary facilities.

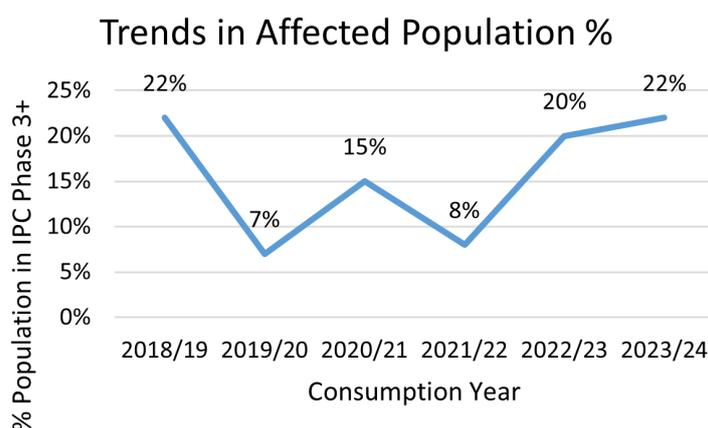
Trends

In comparison with the past five years, this year has the highest number of highly food insecure populations (4.4 million) followed by the 2022/23 consumption year (3.8 million) and the 2018/2019 consumption year (3.3 million). The projected highly food insecure populations were the lowest in 2019/20 and 2021/22 consumption years with almost 1.1 million and nearly 1.5 million people classified in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse), respectively. This is mostly attributed to good production seasons in these seasons. In terms of percentages, this year and 2018/19 consumption year both have the highest number of highly food insecure populations with 22 percent of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) followed by 2022/23 with 20 percent of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). This was followed by 2020/21 consumption year with 15 percent of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse), while 2019/20 consumption year registered the lowest population in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) at 7 percent of the population. The figure below shows the trend in projected populations in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) from 2018/19 to 2023/24 consumption years. Generally, there is an upward trend throughout the years. This is mostly on account of lower agricultural production from various shocks such as weather-related shocks, as well as economic decline.

Projected populations in IPC Phase 3 or above: 2018/19-2023/24



Percent of projected population in Phase 3 or above: 2018/19-2023/24



During the past five years, the trend shows that among the three regions, the Southern Region has had the highest number of highly food insecure populations, followed by the Central region while the Northern region has been the least food insecure area. Similarly, this year all the thirteen districts in the Southern region are projected to be in IPC Phase 3, Crisis. The trend also shows that the three Southern region districts of Chikhwawa, Nsanje and Balaka have been the most food insecure districts in the country mostly because they are rain shadow areas. Among the three districts, Nsanje and Balaka have been the most food insecure districts having been projected in IPC Phase 3, Crisis in all the five years, while Chikhwawa was projected in IPC Phase 3, Crisis in four out of the five years. The situation has deteriorated in the four Central region districts of Lilongwe, Nkhotakota, Ntcheu and Salima which are projected to be IPC Phase 3, Crisis, while during the past five years they have mostly been food secure. This is mostly due to weather-related shocks such as late onset of rains, dry spells and early cessation of rains.



For the projected period, all the four urban zones analysed (Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba) are projected to be in IPC Phase 3, Crisis with 470,000 people of the urban population being food insecure, a 25 percent reduction from last year's urban population of 628,000. Despite the decrease in population, it is still large. This is mainly because people living in urban areas mainly rely on purchases for food and staple prices are projected to be higher than the five-year average as well as last year due to low production this year. The main drivers for the deteriorating food security situation in the urban areas are high staple prices, high inflation and high transportation costs. Maize prices are higher this year than last year and the five-year average and are projected to trend above the five-year period during the period October 2023 to March 2024. The high cost of fuel will increase the transportation cost of food to markets which will further increase food prices for most urban populations. The war in Ukraine will continue to exert an upward pressure on inflation which will most affect urban populations. This will be exacerbated by the continued depreciation of the Malawi Kwacha against major trading currencies, thereby affecting food access.

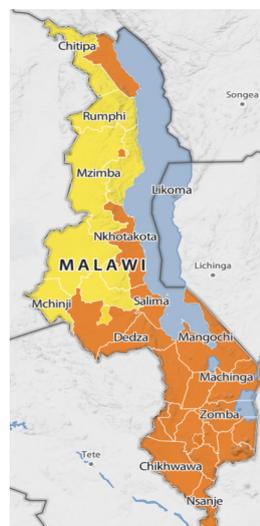
COMPARISON WITH CHRONIC FOOD INSECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Key linkages and comparisons exist between this year's acute food insecurity classification and the chronic food insecurity results.

Between June and September, all the three severely chronically food insecure (IPC CFI Level 4) districts in the country, Balaka, Chikhwawa and Nsanje, have been classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis with 20 percent, 25 percent and 35 percent, respectively, of their populations in IPC Phase or above (Crisis or worse). During the projected period, Balaka and Chikhwawa are classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis with 35 percent of their population in Crisis while Nsanje has 40 percent of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). This shows that these districts are both acutely and chronically food insecure. This is because these districts are rain shadow areas and therefore experience major climatic shocks especially prolonged dry spells and floods year in year out and this year were hit with Cyclone Freddy. The two Northern region districts (Likoma and Nkhatabay) with the lowest chronic food insecurity (IPC CFI Level 2 – Mild) have been classified in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and are both projected to be in IPC Phase 2 during the October 2023 – March 2024 period. This depicts a situation of both low acute and low chronic food insecurity. The remaining districts projected to be moderately chronically food insecure (IPC CFI Level 3) are also projected to be highly food insecure, IPC Phase 3 apart from Chitipa, Rumphi, Mzimba, Kasungu, Dowa, Ntchisi and Mchinji which have been classified in IPC Phase 2. The main driver for both acute and chronic food insecurity is recurrent weather-related hazards and stresses which reduce food production in the country and dependence on low value livelihood strategies such as casual labour and petty trade.

The southern region of Malawi has high levels of poverty being a result of persistent exposure to shocks such as floods and drought. These factors have eroded the livelihoods of the households further compounding the poverty levels. Majority of the households depend on the staple production and lack diversification in sources of income and food making them more vulnerable to shocks year in and year out.

October 2023 - March 2024 period



Key for the Map

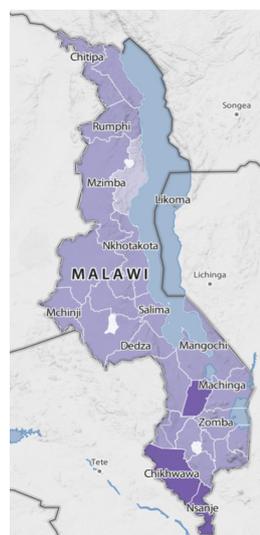
IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

(mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)

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

Evidence Level
*** High

2022 - 2026



Key for the Map

IPC Chronic Food Insecurity Classification

(mapped Level represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)

- 1 - None
- 2 - Mild
- 3 - Moderate
- 4 - Severe
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Response Priorities

1. There is need to conduct a nutrition survey that will provide nutrition indicators to make the assessment more robust.
2. A market survey and monitoring system is key to provide sufficient market data that can guide humanitarian response modalities.
3. Promoting winter cropping and facilitating the distribution of inputs during the winter season can enhance agricultural productivity and food security. Supporting farmers with appropriate inputs, such as seeds and fertilizers, during this period can enable them to cultivate additional crops and improve their overall agricultural production.
4. Expanding social cash transfer programs can be an effective strategy to address immediate and long-term food security challenges. These programs provide direct financial assistance to vulnerable households, allowing them to meet their basic needs and invest in income-generating activities.
5. ADMARC should stock adequate maize to stabilize maize prices. Sufficient grain reserves will ensure the availability of affordable food during periods of scarcity, thereby regulating prices and ensuring food security for the population.
6. Ensuring the timely supply and distribution of inputs through the Affordable Inputs Program is vital for improving crop productivity and enhancing food security. By doing so, this program can contribute to increased agricultural production and better food availability.
7. Promoting food diversification is important for enhancing dietary diversity and improving nutritional outcomes. Disseminating key messages on the importance of diverse and balanced diets is essential for behaviour change and positive nutrition practices.
8. Addressing feeding practices and post-harvest management is critical for reducing food loss and waste.

Situation Monitoring and update

- Maize prices: projected to be significantly above a five-year average due to low production and high demand from other Sub-Saharan African countries. Currently, maize prices are trending higher than the five-year average.

Risk factors to monitor

- **Price shocks:** the general price increase of food and non-food commodities will pose the risk to the households in terms of food access due to loss of purchasing power and unstable supply of commodities on both local and international markets.
- **Conflict:** War in Ukraine will continue to influence the prices of food and non-food commodities thereby eroding the purchasing power of the affected households.
- **El Nino:** with a high probability of El Nino weather there is a risk of dry weather that may result in losses of crops, animals.
- **Cyclone flooding:** El Nino weather may result in cyclones that may cause flash flooding and increase the risk of loss of livelihoods.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The IPC AFI Analysis workshop took place from 2 to 12 July. A total of 50 participants attended this analysis, including representatives from the ministries of agriculture, livestock and water development, economic planning and development, HIV and Nutrition section of Ministry of Education, WFP, FEWS NET, FAO, UNICEF, Care Malawi, Save the Children, CONCERN Worldwide and international analysts and CCLs from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, and Italy. The analysis used a new IPC platform, with Malawi being the first country to transition from using the ISS to the new Analysis Platform. In terms of analysis requirement, the level of evidence of this analysis, as defined by the IPC protocols, was assessed as High Evidence Level ((***) Evidence Level 3).

Analysts were split into four regions (North, Central, East and South) with each district being independently analysed but compared with the neighboring districts in the same region.

Upon completion of entries into the platform, technical consensus process involved each region presenting their results and reviewed by the facilitators, vetting of the results and the plenary discussion before the team integrated comments and closed the analysis.

The draft report was developed by the MVAC secretariat and forwarded to the Government for endorsement. However, to have buy-in, a discussion was conducted at the districts level with main stakeholders (NGOs, government departments, representative from community) to discuss the results of the analysis before the Humanitarian Response Committee begins to deliberate of the development of the Lean Season Integrated Response Programme.

Sources

The MVAC TWG conducted an Annual Assessment and Analysis from June to July. The main surveys undertaken were HEA data collection, rural household food security survey and urban food security survey. Other complementing surveys were done by FEWS NET and WFP.

The main data sources used for this analysis include Household Food Security Survey, Agricultural Crop Production Estimates (APES), Price Projections (FEWS NET), Price data Ministry of Agriculture (Agricultural Market Information System- AMIS), mVAM data from WFP, National Statistics Office (population) and District Food Security reports, Smart survey (UNICEF).

Limitations of the analysis

This year's process faced several challenges: funding for activities was minimal which led to the activities being streamlined and the Market Assessment was foregone which resulted in an absence of a report that could have provided guidance on humanitarian response modalities for the lean period.

IPC Analysis Partners:



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.

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This analysis has been conducted under the patronage of the MVAC (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture). It has benefited from the technical and financial support of the IPC Global Support Unit for the analysis and USAID for data collection.

Classification of food insecurity 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, FEWS NET, Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, IGAD, Oxfam, PROGRESAN-SICA, SADC, Save the Children, UNICEF and WFP.