Overview

Approximately 25.8 million people are projected to experience high levels of acute food insecurity classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3 or above) between January and June 2023. According to an updated projection analysis conducted in April 2023, this is an increase on the already high magnitude of 24.5 million people projected in the July 2022 analysis, confirming the significance of the scale of food insecurity at the national level. Of the total 25.8 million people, approximately 3.4 million people are estimated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) – a significant increase from 2.8 million in the July 2022 analysis. The number of people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) has increased from 21.7 million to 22.4 million in the recent analysis.

Armed conflict, leading to massive population displacement, continues to reduce the purchasing power of the poorest households with the populations most affected by acute food insecurity being IDPs and households hosting displaced or returned families as well as households living in areas affected by armed conflict.

The seven territories most affected in the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri are Rutshuru, Nyiragongo, Masisi, Beni and Goma and Djugu and Mambasa, respectively. The territories of Djugu (Ituri) and Rutshuru (North Kivu) both slid from Crisis (IPC Phase 3) into Emergency compared to the July 2022 analysis with 65 percent and 55 percent of their populations in Crisis or Emergency. The city of Goma (North Kivu) was classified in Phase 2, Stressed and is now in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) as it remains heavily affected by armed conflict and military operations in the surrounding territories – limiting the capacity to supply food to local markets. The movement of people into production areas, particularly the territories of Rutshuru, Nyiragongo, Massi and Djugu, has affected local agricultural production and it is estimated that around 1 million displaced people have been accommodated in the city of Goma, putting great pressure on local livelihoods and resources.

Key Drivers

Conflict and insecurity

An intensification of armed and inter-communal conflicts, primarily in the east of the country continues to cause massive population movement. These populations are abandoning their livelihoods to escape armed conflict, which is impeding their ability to access food, particularly in the provinces of North Kivu, Rutshuru, Ituri, Nyiragongo, Masisi, Beni and Goma and Djugu and Mambasa. According to OCHA, the DRC currently has around 6.3 million displaced people and 2.3 million returnees.

High food prices

Prices of major food commodities have been trending upwards since the last analysis in July 2022. Comparatively speaking, the prices of maize and beans remain above the seasonal average and due to the instability of the exchange rates of the national currency against the US currency, the prices of these products could continue to rise, further weakening the purchasing power of the poorest households.

Humanitarian food support

The protracted nature of the current DRC crises as well as the emergence of new crises – notably in Sudan and Ukraine – may exacerbate the already precarious situation of households in need of humanitarian food assistance.

Low agricultural production

Previous negative anomalies – mainly poor distribution of rainfall and excessive rainfall causing flooding – are expected to lead to below-average agricultural production. Ongoing conflict also continues to prevent or reduce peoples access to the production basins.

Recommended Actions

End violence and inter-communal conflict

Armed conflict is creating a major crisis in the heart of eastern territories where there was already high acute food insecurity. Efforts are needed to support the restoration of peace and security to end violence and prevent conflict resurgence to protect civilians in this part of the country.

Humanitarian assistance

Scale up operations by mobilising additional capacity and facilitating humanitarian access in combat zones and areas under the control of armed forces.

Livelihood support

Support, protect and restore the livelihoods of food insecure households through assistance in rebuilding their productive capital (including agricultural recovery for returnees).

Food and security policy

Support the implementation of the roadmap on food systems as well as the national food and nutritional security policy. Support the establishment and operation of a mechanism to control and manage food prices through the deployment of the national strategic reserve throughout the country.

IPC Analysis partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture (PRONANUT)
- Ministry of Planning (PRONAT)
- Ministry of Health (MSF)
- Ministry of Nutrition (UNSAPR)
- Ministry of Works (MASATU)
- Ministry of Social Services (CAID)
- Ministry of Urban Development (CSIO)
- Ministry of Transport (CDTSM)
- National Institute of Statistics of the DRC
- Food and Security Cluster, Nutrition Cluster, ACLE, FORDOM, Foodunited, ACTED, WFP, Vetro, with the technical support of IPC GIZ.