NAMIBIA
Climatic shocks, economic decline, and rising prices are driving acute food insecurity in Namibia

Overview
Food insecurity exists when people have limited capacity physically and economically to access adequate food at household level. In the current period, from July to September 2023, 579,000 people in Namibia (22 percent of the population) face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) and require urgent action to reduce food gaps and protect livelihoods. Only two regions, Erongo and Khomas are classified in IPC Phase 2, Stressed, and need action for livelihood protection, while the remaining 12 regions are classified in IPC Phase 3, Crisis. Namibia's deteriorating food security is mainly driven by climatic shocks like drought/dry spells/erratic rainfall, prices shocks, economic decline, and unemployment.

In the first projected period, from October 2023 to March 2024, 695,000 people (26 percent of the population) are expected to be in IPC Phase 3 or above. Erongo and Hardap regions are expected to be in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and the remaining regions are expected to be in IPC Phase 3, Crisis. Erongo region is anticipated to remain in IPC Phase 2, Stressed due to government interventions and possible employment opportunities from the mining sector; while Khomas region is expected to fall in IPC Phase 3, Crisis. An improvement for Hardap region from IPC Phase 3, Crisis to IPC Phase 2, Stressed will be due to the government planned intervention of drought relief in terms of food support to the region. The food security situation is expected to worsen with 4 percent since this period represent the first half of Namibia's lean

Key Drivers

Dry spells
Namibia faced adverse effects of dry spells and erratic rainfall, impacting crop and livestock production. Livestock mortality rates rose due to insufficient grazing land and water, while crop harvests also dwindled in affected regions.

Price shocks
Rising global prices of fuel products have prompted an escalation in both food and non-food costs, consequently diminishing the purchasing power of individuals.

Unemployment
The COVID-19 pandemic caused economic decline and job losses, leaving many households reliant on markets for food.

Note: According to IPC Acute Food Insecurity classification protocols, an area is classified in a specific IPC Phase when at least 20% of the population in the area are experiencing the conditions related to that Phase or above.
season, prices start to rise, and most households would have used up their own production’s stocks and some households have not harvested during the previous harvest seasons especially the northeastern crop growing regions.

On the other hand, during the projected period 2, from April to June 2024, it is projected that the situation will relatively improve as households start consuming food from their own production, which marks the beginning of the 2023–2024 consumption period. During this period, it is estimated that 491,000 people or 19 percent of the population will experience high food insecurity, IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). The situation is expected to recover in seven out of thirteen regions in the second projection compared to the current and/or first projection periods. Kharas, Erongo, Hardap, Kavango West, Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto and Zambezi region are expected to be in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and other six regions expected to remain in IPC Phase 3, Crisis. Food and non-food item prices increase which is triggered by the global price increments in fuel products, resulting in reduced people's purchasing power.

The 2022/23 agricultural season rainfall performance was generally poor for most of the regions, with below average rainfall recorded, which resulted in poor crop harvest especially for the northern crop growing regions. Moreover, poor rainfall over the northwestern and southern parts of the country has negatively impacted pasture biomass conditions, particularly in the northern regions of Kunene, Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena Oshikoto, and the southern regions of Hardap and Kharas.

Preliminary findings on crop and livestock production estimates shows that poor pastures and water deficit has negatively impacted livestock production and poor grazing which led to poor livestock conditions in most regions, with Zambezi, Kavango East, Kavango West livestock’s condition ranging from good to fair, resulting in low livestock prices in the affected regions.
### ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY CURRENT SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (JULY - SEPTEMBER 2023)

#### Key for the Map
**IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification**
- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine

#### Evidence Level
- Medium
- Acceptable
- **High**
- **Famine**
- Areas not analysed
- Scarce evidence due to limited or absent data

#### Population table for the current period: July – September 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population analysed</th>
<th>Phase 1 #people</th>
<th>Phase 1 %</th>
<th>Phase 2 #people</th>
<th>Phase 2 %</th>
<th>Phase 3 #people</th>
<th>Phase 3 %</th>
<th>Phase 4 #people</th>
<th>Phase 4 %</th>
<th>Phase 5 #people</th>
<th>Phase 5 %</th>
<th>Area Phase</th>
<th>Phase 3+ #people</th>
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<td>Ohangwena</td>
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<tr>
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<td>27,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omusati</td>
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<td>118,000</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>91,000</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Oshana</td>
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<td>104,000</td>
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<td>62,000</td>
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<td>42,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshikoto</td>
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<td>107,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43,000</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>43,000</td>
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<td>Otjozondjupa</td>
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<td>59,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambezi</td>
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<td>39,000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,642,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,094,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>969,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
<td><strong>556,000</strong></td>
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<td><strong>13,000</strong></td>
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<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>579,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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. Marginal inconsistencies that may arise in the overall percentages of totals and grand totals are attributable to rounding.*
Between the months of July to September 2023, approximately 579,000 people in Namibia (22 percent of the population) are estimated to be facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) and requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. Of this population, 566,000 people experiencing IPC Phase 3, Crisis and 13,000 face IPC Phase 4, Emergency, an additional 969,000 (37 percent) are IPC Phase 2, Stressed and 1,094,000 (41 percent) are classified under IPC Phase 1, Minimal.

Most of the regions are classified under IPC Phase 3, Crisis except for Erongo and Khomas regions which are classified in IPC Phase 2, Stressed. The most affected regions are Kavango East and Kavango West region with 5 percent of the population estimated to be facing IPC Phase 4, Emergency, respectively.

At regional level, the food insecure population range from 15 percent both in Erongo and Khomas regions correspondingly to 30 percent and 40 percent in Kavango West and Kavango East regions, respectively.

During the current period most households do not have any food stocks most having indicated stocks lasting less than one month and those who had stocks lasting between one to three months have already depleted their food stock. As a result, households have already experienced difficulties in purchasing food due to lack of income and high unemployment rates. Of those households who indicated to have some source of income, majority indicated social grants as their major source of income which may be affected negatively by the household sizes. Moreover, erratic and limited rainfall distribution since the start of the agricultural season in November has resulted in abnormal dry conditions affecting the northern part of the country and resulted in poor crop performance. Additionally, poor rainfall over the northwestern and southern parts of the country during the 2022/2023 agricultural season has negatively impacted pasture biomass conditions, particularly in the crop growing regions as most of the areas crop fields did not mature but rather withered before it reached the mature age and lowering cereal production expectations. Some households in Ohangwena, Oshana and Omusati regions experienced flood during the ploughing season which resulted in the affected households not being able to cultivate during this agricultural season. Furthermore, occurrences of livestock diseases and pests also hampered the livestock production especially in Kavango West and East.

About 85 percent of the population gets their water from private and public taps and 7 percent from boreholes. About 20 percent of the population in Kavango West, Omaheke and Kunene region, respectively get most of their water from boreholes.

Moreover, about 76.4 percent of the population walks less than 2.5 km to water points, 18.1 percent between 2.5 km to 5 km and 5.6 percent walks more than 5 km to water points. Respectively, more than 10 percent of Kavango West, Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Zambezi walks more than 5km to water points.

With little rainfall received this year and flash floods experienced in Ohangwena, Oshana and Omusati, all crop growing regions (Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango East, Kavango West and Zambezi) experienced a poor harvest. The Namibia Total Cereal Production trend preliminary findings for the 2022/23 was 153 000 MT compared to 168 200 MT harvested in 2021/22 season, of which 81 percent of the total production was from the commercial sector and only 19 percent produced from the crop production regions, which is 9 percent lower than the 2021/22 harvest.
ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY FIRST PROJECTION SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (OCTOBER 2023 - MARCH 2024)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population analysed</th>
<th>Phase 1 #people</th>
<th>Phase 1 %</th>
<th>Phase 2 #people</th>
<th>Phase 2 %</th>
<th>Phase 3 #people</th>
<th>Phase 3 %</th>
<th>Phase 4 #people</th>
<th>Phase 4 %</th>
<th>Phase 5 #people</th>
<th>Phase 5 %</th>
<th>Area Phase #people</th>
<th>Phase 3+ %</th>
<th>Region coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erongo</td>
<td>215,700</td>
<td>69,000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No humanitarian access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardap</td>
<td>95,049</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34,000</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Scarce evidence due to limited or absence of caloric needs through assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavango East</td>
<td>160,670</td>
<td>41,000</td>
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<td>50,000</td>
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<td>58,000</td>
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<td>12,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>High evidence of humanitarian food assistance, affecting at least 20% of the population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavango west</td>
<td>92,239</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33,000</td>
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<td>9,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>High evidence of humanitarian food assistance, affecting at least 20% of the population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kharas</td>
<td>94,294</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29,000</td>
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<td>20,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>212,000</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kunene</td>
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<td>40,000</td>
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<td>Ohangwena</td>
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<td>82,000</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaheke</td>
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<td>23,000</td>
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<td>28,000</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>Omusati</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>42,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>695,000</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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. Marginal inconsistencies that may arise in the overall percentages of totals and grand totals are attributable to rounding.
ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY FIRST PROJECTION OVERVIEW  
(OCTOBER 2023 - MARCH 2024)

During the first projection period (October 2023 – March 2024), the number of people expected to experience food insecurity is likely to increase by an estimated 4 percent from the current number of 579,000 to 695,000 people. Out of this population 65,000 (2 percent) will face emergency food insecurity (IPC Phase 4), 630,000 (24 percent) in IPC Phase 3, Crisis, 943,000 (36 percent percent) are anticipated to be in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and 1,004,000 (38 percent) in IPC Phase 1, Minimal.

Kavango West, Kavango East, Omaheke, Ohangwena, Hardap, Kharas, Zambezi, Otjozondjupa, Oshana, Omusati, Oshikoto and Kunene regions are classified under IPC Phase 3, Crisis while Erongo and Khomas regions are classified in IPC Phase 2. The most affected regions are Kavango East and Kavango West region with 5 percent of the population estimated to be facing IPC Phase 4, Emergency, respectively.

Erongo region is anticipated to remain in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and Khomas region expected to fall in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). All other regions that were in IPC Phase 3, Crisis except Hardap region are anticipated to remain in IPC Phase 3. The Hardap region is expected to improve from IPC Phase 3 to IPC Phase 2.

At regional level, the situation will deteriorate significantly especially in Kavango West, Kavango East, Omaheke, Ohangwena with at least 35 percent of their populations, respectively being in IPC Phase 3 or above.

The main factors that are likely to affect the food security during the first projected period will prolong dry spells and erratic rainfall which has been below normal for the past years, negatively impacting livelihoods and crop and livestock production. Due to poor harvest during the current agricultural season, households have limited food stock which will have been depleted by the start of the lean season and most households will resort to stress and emergency coping strategies, such as selling of assets to meet food consumption gaps. Furthermore, the global increase of commodity prices and higher rate of unemployment will have an impact on the food systems especially for those with no stable income.

The Seasonal Rainfall forecast has predicted an El Nino phenomenon with a high probability which will cause drier conditions. These conditions which are likely to result into below normal rainfall for the 2023/24 rainfall season will affect both crop and livestock production consequently negatively affecting the consumption period from April to June 2023.
### ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY SECOND PROJECTION SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE (APRIL - JUNE 2024)

#### Key for the Map
**IPC Acute Food Insecurity**
- Phase Classification (mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)
- Map Symbols
  - 1 - Minimal
  - 2 - Stressed
  - 3 - Crisis
  - 4 - Emergency
  - 5 - Famine

**Evidence Level**
- Areas with insufficient evidence
- Areas not analysed

#### Population table for the second projected period: April – June 2024

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population Analysed</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
<th>Phase 5</th>
<th>Area Phase</th>
<th>Phase 3+</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,642,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,139,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,012,000</strong></td>
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<td><strong>487,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,000</strong></td>
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</table>

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

**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. Marginal inconsistencies that may arise in the overall percentages of totals and grand totals are attributable to rounding.
ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY SECOND PROJECTION OVERVIEW (APRIL - JUNE 2024)

The number of people expected to experience food insecurity is expected to decrease by an estimated 7 percent from the projected period 1 of 695,000 to 491,000 people.

Out of this population in 4,000 (0.2 percent) are anticipated to face IPC Phase 4, Emergency; 487,000 (18 percent) in IPC Phase 3, Crisis; 1,012,000 (38 percent) in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and 1,142,000 (43 percent) in IPC Phase 1, Minimal.

The situation is expected to improve in seven out of thirteen regions in the second projection period compared to the current and/or first projection periods as households will have access to higher production. Kharas, Erongo, Hardap, Kavango West, Omaheke, Erongo and Hardap region are expected to be in IPC Phase 2, Stressed and other six regions are likely to remain in IPC Phase 3, Crisis.

At regional level, the situation for the estimated population anticipated to be in IPC Phase 3 or above ranges from 35 percent to 10 percent with Omaheke having the highest population, followed by Kavango East with 30 percent and Erongo being the lowest with 10 percent of its population being in IPC Phase 3 or above.

However, it is important to note that, with the anticipated El Niño, which is likely to affect Africa, Central America, and Far East Asia during the 2023/24 agricultural season, the situation in the country will be negatively affected due to more dry and limited rainfall, which could put food security in the country at risk. Therefore, the projected population 491,000 anticipated to be in Phase 3 or above during April to June 2024 is likely to increase.

Key Assumptions for the projection period

**Food availability:** Food availability for commodities including staples is expected to deteriorate and localized deficits will be experienced during the first projection period which is also the lean season.

**Fuel prices:** Commodity prices are expected to trend at levels above five-year average prices throughout the projected periods being a result of the escalating fuel prices.

**Inflation:** Cost of fuel will likely affect the exchange rate and impact negatively on the economy. Growth is expected to slow down. Households will therefore bear the brunt of a strained economy.

**Dry spells and erratic rainfall:** Seasonal forecast from the European Commission latest forecast of the period until December 2023 shows below normal rainfall forecast for Namibia until December 2023 which will affect local food production and ultimately food security in the country. This may result in Namibia experiencing drought/dry spells which will affect food production in the projected periods.

**El Niño:** El Niño which is likely to negatively affect Africa, Central America and Far East Asia during the 2023/24 agricultural season, will negatively impact the situation in the country as a result of limited rainfall, increasing the level of household vulnerability to food insecurity.

**Humanitarian assistance:** Humanitarian Food Assistance (HFA) from the Office of the Prime Minister will likely continue through the projection period.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Response Priorities

The following response priorities are proposed:

• Urgent action is required to save lives, reduce food consumption gaps and protect livelihoods especially those classified in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse).

• MAWLR to invest in development of water infrastructure equipment to be used to harvest and store water especially during the flood seasons which will be used for domestic and livestock use.

• MAWLR to avail more agricultural equipment’s such as tractors to farmers for agricultural ploughing.

• MAWLR to provide financial support to non-operational green scheme to enable them to be functional, which provides food and employment opportunities to communities.

• MAWLR to develop the underground water aquifer in Ohangwena region to supply water to the northern Namibia

• Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to continue with the food distribution for the Marginalized Communities.

• Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) to promote resilience/climate-smart agricultural production in the areas which depend on crop and livestock activities, especially drought resistance cereal/crop seeds which matures early and able to give yield within a short period of time.

• It was observed during data collection that majority of the population do not have national documents, either due to transport costs or residency years requirements, hence not able to benefit from different social grants and children not able to enrolled in higher educations, therefore, Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration Safety and Security (MHAISS) to reach out to the communities through household visits to register those eligible and re-look at the minimum cut off years of acquiring citizenship through naturalization etc.

• It was detected during data collection that majority of the households who depends on social grant as their main source of income spends more than half of the grants on food purchases leaving non-food items not attended to eg. Education, due to the inadequate income to cater for all the needs, especially households with bigger household sizes. Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to consider raising social grants income.

• In case the key assumptions in section 6 holds e.g., the occurrence of the anticipated El Niño and seasonal rainfall performance, it is recommended that NAMVAC update the acute food insecurity projection figures especially the projection period 2 of April-June 2024 to updated figures.

Risk factors to monitor

• Prices for staple commodities

• Informal cross-border food trade

• The impact of COVID-19 on food security

• Inflation and its impact on the Namibian Dollar

• Seasonal rainfall performance

• African migratory locust infestations across the country

• Flooding in the areas that are likely to receive above-normal rainfall

• The drought situation in Kunene, Omusati, Erongo and other potential regions
PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NamVAC) carried out a food security assessment to determine the situation across the 14 regions of Namibia. The review focused on the period between July to September 2023 and two projections, projecting for October 2023 to March 2024 and April to June 2024. The available data from the survey represents Evidence Level 3. The data was based on sampling design that was guided by the Namibia Statistics Agency. The data was then cleaned and analysed for the various outputs used for the IPC analysis.

Data collection and analysis was conducted by participants drawn from the NamVAC membership at National and Regional levels, Non-Governmental Organizations (Namibia Red Cross Society), University of Namibia and the United Nations (WFP, UNDP, WHO, FAO & UNICEF). The analysis workshop was facilitated by the IPC GSU.

Overall, data analysis was done using the IPC protocols based on the IPC Technical Manual Version 3.1. Analysts were split by regions to provide regional information into Information Support System according to IPC protocols. Namibia was the second country to use the new IPC developed system.

Sources

The main source of data was from the NamVAC Assessment 2023/24, which provided outcome as well as contributing factor evidence. Other sources of data included but not limited to:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform on crops, livestock, WASH, pest’s management and water levels;
- Ministry of Health and Social Services on disease outbreaks, malnutrition cases;
- Ministry of Works and Transport (Namibia Meteorological Services) on climate outlook;
- Regional Councils and Local Authorities on local reports;
- Bank of Namibia on macroeconomic information, repo rates and exchange rates;
- Namibia Statistics Agency on demographic, price and other information;
- World Food Programme on Seasonal: Rainfall & Vegetation data and Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) data
- European Commission for the African Seasonal forecast

Limitations of the analysis

- Insufficient capacity of certified IPC technical staff in the country.
- Data that needed deeper analysis before use based on the IPC protocols some of which may render information not useable
- Inadequate time for the refresher training and analysis
- Inadequate primary and secondary data at the time of the analysis on some outcome indicators mainly on mortality and malnutrition.

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

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IPC Global Support Unit
www.ipcinfo.org

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 FAO/GSU for the analysis and USAID for data collection.

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, CISS, EC-JRC , FAO, FEWS NET, Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, IGAD, Oxfam, PROGRESAN-SICA, SADC, Save the Children, UNICEF and WFP.