Overview

Timor-Leste ranks 16th according to the World Risk Index, which indicates the country’s severe exposure, vulnerability, and susceptibility to shocks – as well as the lack of coping and adaptive capacities. Floods, in particular, have affected food insecurity significantly in 2022. During the current period of analysis (November 2022 to April 2023), corresponding to the lean season, nearly 300,000 people representing 22% of the total population face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), of which 286,000 people (21% of the total population) are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), and 13,000 (1%) in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). Urgent action is required to protect livelihoods, reduce food consumption gaps, and save lives and livelihoods of the people experiencing Crisis or Emergency food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above). Out of the fourteen municipalities, eleven are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), whereas three municipalities are in IPC Phase 2 (Stressed). The main drivers of high acute food insecurity include high food prices, reduced purchasing power, and the persistent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the 2021 and 2022 floods. The projection period, May to September 2023, corresponds to the harvest / post-harvest season and shows a slight reduction of people classified in IPC Phase 3 or above, from 22% to 21%. Of this group, Ermera has 5% of its population in Phase 4 (Emergency), making up 1% of the total population in Phase 4 (Emergency). The main factor contributing to a slight improvement of food security is the expected positive impact of harvest, which generates 1% of the total population in Phase 4 (Emergency). The main factor contributing to a slight improvement of food security is the expected positive impact of harvest, which generates 1% of the total population in Phase 4 (Emergency). The main factor contributing to a slight improvement of food security is the expected positive impact of harvest, which generates 1% of the total population in Phase 4 (Emergency). The main factor contributing to a slight improvement of food security is the expected positive impact of harvest, which generates 1% of the total population in Phase 4 (Emergency).

Key Drivers of Acute Food Insecurity

- **Reduced purchasing power**: The COVID-19 pandemic as well as the Russia-Ukraine conflict have intensified underlying issues in Timor-Leste, reducing incomes, and increasing food and fuel prices.
- **Floods**: The floods in early 2022 and 2021 have significantly affected the population, creating long-lasting effects on food security of affected populations and into the current period.
- **COVID-19**: The pandemic has intensified the underlying issues in Timor-Leste, resulting in poorer harvest, reduced income, and increased household debt, etc.

Recommended Actions

- **Humanitarian assistance**: Provide humanitarian assistance. In order to protect the lives and livelihoods of the 22% population classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above, an immediate launch of humanitarian support is required; also considering the three municipalities with a 5% population in Emergency food insecurity (IPC Phase 4). Any delays in the humanitarian response will lead to the deterioration of the food security of the population.
- **Livelihood support**: According to the findings of the 2022 mVAM Food Security Survey, seven out of ten households are engaging in livelihood-based coping strategies to mitigate their food shortages. Furthermore, the survey reveals that the primary concerns of households are increased food prices (67%) and shortage of food (16%). Therefore, the scale-up of livelihood support programs is required to ensure income sources and mitigate the loss of purchasing power of the most vulnerable households.
- **Resilience building**: Considering the regular occurrence of extreme climatic shocks, stakeholders should focus their attention and funding on programs that aim to build resilience to disasters and strengthen emergency preparedness to mitigate the impact. In particular, investing in climate-resilient infrastructure is essential, as Timor-Leste continues to be affected by climate-related disasters without sustained improvements in critical infrastructure.