

# MALAWI

## NEARLY 1.9 MILLION PEOPLE IN MALAWI ARE FOOD INSECURE ACCORDING TO AN UPDATED IPC/VAC PROJECTION

## IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS NOVEMBER 2019– MARCH 2020

Issued January 2020

### Overview

In the period November 2019 to March 2020, which is the peak of the hunger season, about 1.9 million people are estimated to be in IPC Phase 3+ and require urgent action to prevent significant food consumption gaps and prevent use of negative livelihood coping strategies.

The food security situation in Malawi has significantly deteriorated since the projection undertaken in June for most of the country owing to changes in availability of maize grain stocks, the price of maize and alternative food commodities, the decrease in the winter harvest, below average rainfall forecast for the southern districts, and consequent reduction in agricultural labour opportunities.

The key driver of Malawi's food insecurity is high maize prices, which are projected to hover between 60 and 100 percent above average between November 2019 and March 2020.

### UPDATED PROJECTION NOV 2019 - MARCH 2020

<p><b>1.879M</b> 13% of the population</p> <p>People facing severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+)</p> <p>IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION</p>	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4	39,211 People in Emergency
	Phase 3	1,840,180 People in Crisis
	Phase 2	4,314,745 People in Stress
	Phase 1	8,539,874 People minimally food insecure

### Key Drivers



#### High Inflation

Inflation, characterised by high staple food and fuel prices reduce purchasing power of vulnerable households through the country.



#### Low crop production

High temperatures, lack of rains, Fall Armyworm incidences and the cassava mealybug destroying the cassava crop within the Nkhata Bay Cassava Livelihood Zone further reduced the winter harvest.



#### Maize shortages

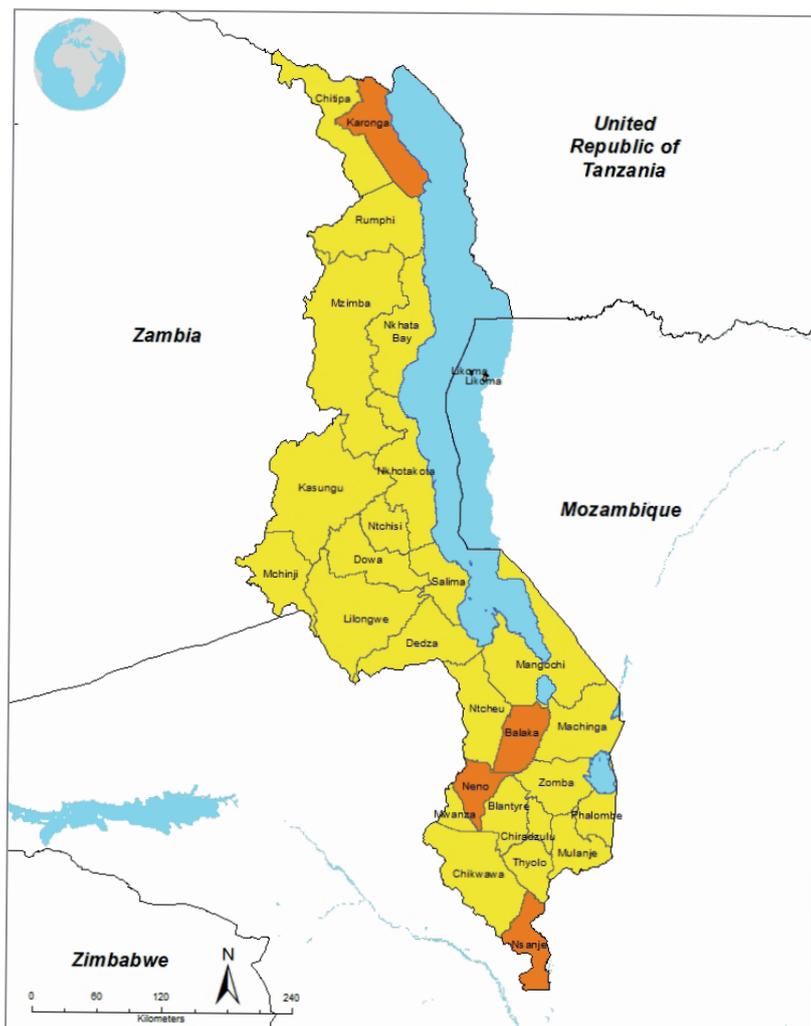
Low market availability of maize is contributing to unprecedented price increases of maize and alternative commodities (60-100% above average), even in areas producing a surplus of maize, as private traders withhold stocks for better prices. Although production of maize was average in the 2018/19 season, localized shortfalls in the South led to an early reliance on markets.



#### Low income

Low tobacco prices, a key cash crop in Malawi has led to reduced income opportunities and low access to food for many households.

### Projected Situation November 2019 - March 2020



### Key for the Map

#### IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

1 - Minimal	5 - Famine
2 - Stress	Areas with inadequate evidence
3 - Crisis	Areas not analysed (inaccessible)
4 - Emergency	



## Key Findings

In the Northern Region, the main drivers for the change in classification from Phase 1 to 2 include: high prices and failure of the cassava crop due to the cassava mealy-bug.

The main drivers for the change in classification for Karonga from Phase 2 to 3 include: very high prices due to low maize supply on the market. Karonga relies on source markets in Chitipa who are supplying less stocks to Karonga due to demand from neighbouring Tanzania.

For the Central Region, the main drivers for the change in phase classification from Phase 1 to 2 include: low tobacco prices that have resulted in farmers substituting tobacco with excessive sales of maize. Overselling of maize has resulted in depletion of own stocks for most households who are now turning to the market to purchase the grain.

The Southern Region is generally a food deficit region that is highly dependent on imports from the Central and Northern Regions. Prices are highest in the South and thus a lot more people are unable to access maize at high prices. The Southern Region remains highly vulnerable to climate-induced shocks, and to further deterioration.

## Response Priorities

- ADMARC should restock and open its markets to drive down prices of maize
- Government and partners should provide urgent action and provide humanitarian assistance to the populations in Phase 3 and worse.
- Maize is in the hands of private traders who need enticing to release the grain. Market assessment results show that CBT would be viable in Lilongwe, Mchinji, Nkhhotakota and Dowa. The rest of the districts would be viable for commodity vouchers or CBT if prices were to drop.

## Key Factors to Monitor

- The price changes for maize and alternative food commodities
- Levels of acute malnutrition in areas at risk of deterioration of nutritional indicators
- Infestation of Fall Armyworm on summer maize crop
- Inflation and impact on the Malawian Kwacha
- Possibility of flooding at the beginning of the next rainy season
- Maize Import Ban Policy
- Fuel prices

## 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

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This analysis was conducted under the patronage of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. It has benefited from the technical and financial support of the IPC Global Support Unit and USAID.

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, CILSS, EC-JRC, FAO, FEWSNET, Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, IGAD, Oxfam, PROGRESSAN-SICA, SADC, Save the Children, UNICEF and WFP.

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