

Overview

During the 2025/26 lean season (October 2025–March 2026), approximately 3.5 million people are facing high levels of acute food insecurity and are classified in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). Of the 107 districts analysed, 46 are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis).

This estimate draws on the combined findings of two IPC analyses covering the same overall period (October 2025–March 2026). The first is the IPC post-shock acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition analysis (April 2025–March 2026), which assessed 66 shock-affected districts. The second is the IPC post-harvest acute food insecurity analysis (October 2025–September 2026), which assessed 47 predominantly productive districts. Five districts in Cabo Delgado—Balama, Chiure, Montepuez, Mueda and Namuno—were included in both analyses. For these districts, the figures presented reflect the most recent assessment.

While differing in geographic coverage and analytical focus, the two analyses are complementary, and together provide a comprehensive picture of acute food insecurity during the lean season. The shock-focused analysis projects approximately 2.7 million people in IPC Phase 3 or above, including around 170,000 people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). The post-harvest assessment identifies an additional 1.2 million people in IPC Phase 3 or above, including roughly 130,000 people in Phase 4 in districts not covered by the former analysis.

The worst affected districts are northern and central Mozambique, particularly Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia, Tete and Sofala, where conflict-related displacement, cyclone impacts and recurrent climate shocks have significantly eroded people's livelihoods and coping capacity. The most affected groups include poor and very poor rural households dependent on rain-fed agriculture, internally displaced persons (IDPs), households who have recently returned to their communities, and people in cyclone-affected districts. These populations all face constrained access to food, markets and basic services.

Key drivers of food insecurity include irregular rainfall and prolonged dry spells, the compounded effects of successive cyclones, persistent insecurity and displacement in northern districts, and elevated food prices that continue to limit food access for poor households. While some productive areas have seen seasonal improvements following the 2024/2025 harvest, the scale and severity of IPC Phase 3 or above outcomes expected during the 2025/2026 lean season underscore the need for sustained, life-saving humanitarian assistance and livelihood protection. This must be complemented by strengthened early warning systems, climate-resilient agriculture, market-support interventions, and integrated nutrition, health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) responses to prevent further deterioration.

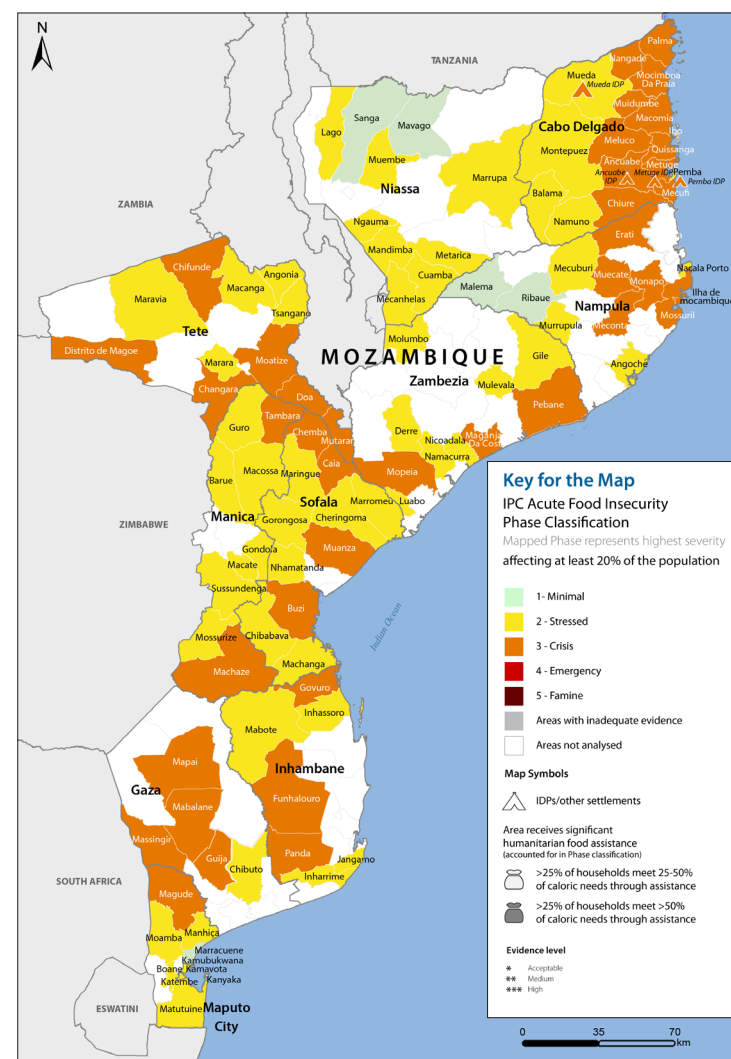
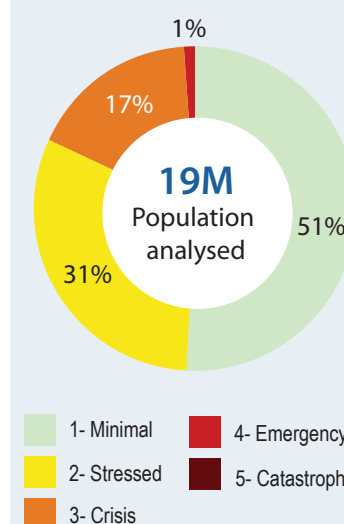


Projected Acute Food Insecurity | October 2025 - March 2026

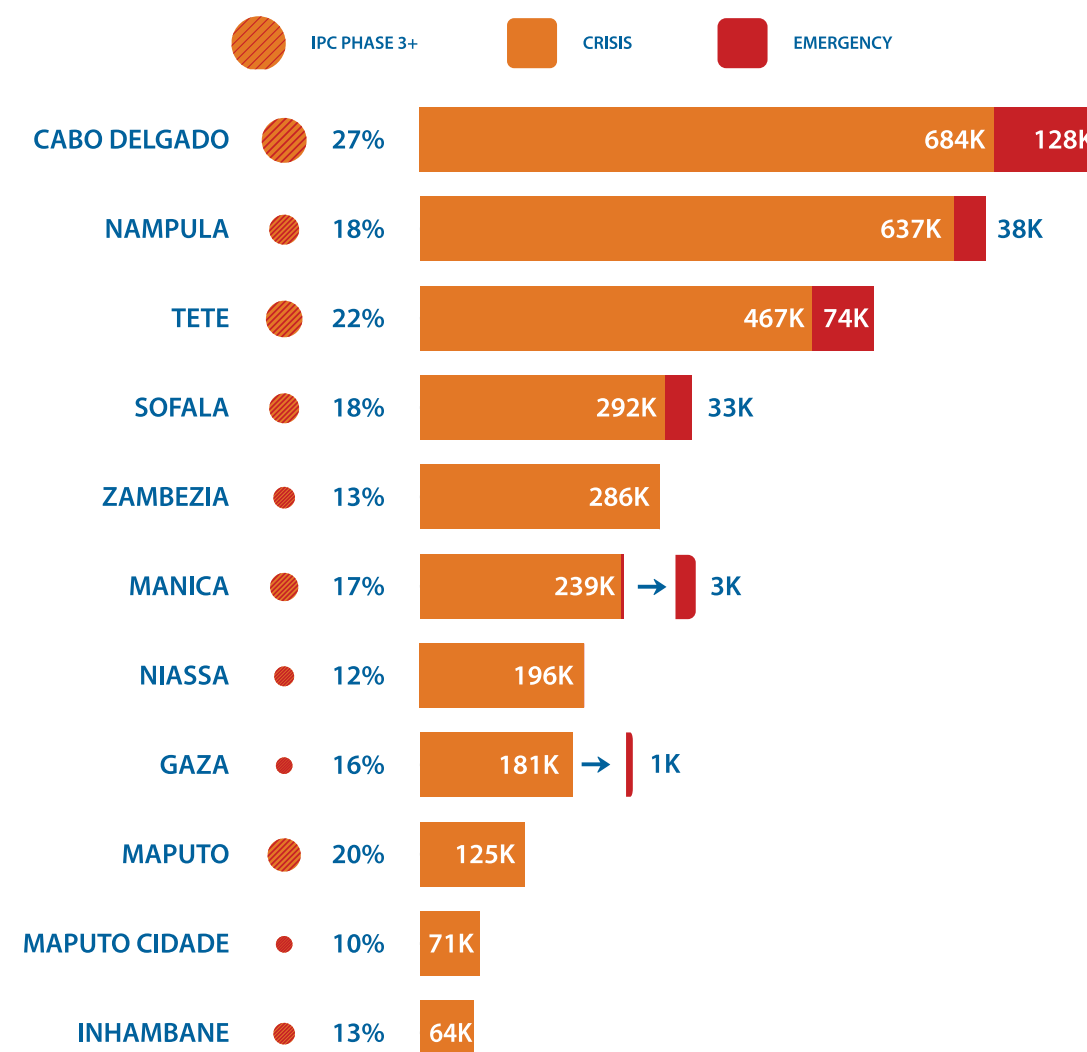


Between October 2025 and March 2026, the situation is expected to worsen, with over 2.7 million people likely to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above).

18 percent of the population will likely be in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse).



Number of people and share of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above by province October 2025 - March 2026



Key Drivers



Climatic shocks

Recurrent climate shocks, including cyclones, irregular rainfall and prolonged dry spells, continue to erode livelihoods and coping capacities. Poor rural households dependent on rain-fed agriculture, displaced and cyclone-affected populations face constrained access to food, markets and basic services.



Conflict and insecurity

Persistent insecurity and conflict-related displacement, particularly in northern Mozambique, continue to disrupt livelihoods, restrict access to food, markets and basic services, and undermine people's coping capacity.



High food prices

Financial access to food, markets and basic services remains constrained for poor households. Elevated food prices and reduced purchasing power continue to limit market access, exacerbating food insecurity during the 2025/26 lean season.

Recommended Actions



Humanitarian Food Security Assistance (HFSA)

Maintain HFSA for vulnerable households, particularly IDPs, cyclone- and conflict-affected populations, and those in IPC Phase 3 or above. Sustained support is needed during the lean season to prevent further deterioration of food security and protect lives while communities rebuild resilience.



Livelihood support

Strengthen livelihoods by providing essential agricultural supplies and fishing equipment to poor households and IDPs, reducing their reliance on HFSA.



Integrated multisectoral programming

Mitigate compounded impacts and prevent further deterioration among vulnerable populations through integrated nutrition, health, and WASH interventions.

IPC Analysis Partners

